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THE OPENING YEAR.

BY WM. MACKINTOSH.

"Now shall we be, or how shall we
Be happy thro' the opening year?"
Thus many muse, and long for clues
That might foreshadow what is near.

Some foolish wait and dream that fate
May bring them better times and joy;
While others act, by work and tact,
And reap rich harvests from employ.

In length of years, it plain appears,
The best way happiness depends;
Who never wastes the present, rests
More sure of pleasure, wealth and friends.

SISTER OR WIFE?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

RAIN or shine, wet or dry, Mrs. Meynell's garden-party—that festivity in honor of which her family did a little starving during both the preceding and succeding months—was an annual fixture for the first day of July.

Why the lady should have felt it incumbent upon herself, and everybody else who was anybody in Somerlea, to congratulate her husband upon the completion of another idle, purposeless year of his life, who shall say?

Nevertheless, though skies should fall and earth stand still, the observance must be in no way deranged. And because he was a gentleman, albeit a very poor one, and because all who knew him as much as they laughed at him, the county folk, who would no no account have gone a step out of their way simply for his wife's gratification, came miles upon his birthday to do him honor.

For some fifteen years this important event had been duly celebrated on the first of July, and then an effort was made to induce Mrs. Maynell to break away from her long-established custom.

"It will be the very day before Swift and Ernest leave us. Oh, mother, do put it off for just one week. It looks so heartless!"

It was Fern, Mrs. Meynell's twenty-year-old step-daughter, her husband's eldest child, and her own greatest trial, who made the audacious suggestion, with tears standing in her eyes.

"I am ashamed of you, Fern! What are the young men to us? And why should I disturb all my plans on their behalf, pray? The Vicar's son is just as poor as his father, which is saying a good deal; and, though Ernest is Lord Somerton's nephew, he isn't any the richer for that, nor likely to be, so far as I can see."

"As though it mattered whether they were rich or poor!" muttered the girl, bending her head a little lower over the coarse brown sock which she was patiently darning.

Her step-mother caught up the words angrily.

"They think that it matters a good deal, I've not a doubt," she retorted, with an angry nod. "If the Earl were not the stingiest man in creation he'd provide for his nephew, and give him enough to live on."

"Ernest thinks that this opening in Calcutta is promising," said Fern, threading her needle carefully; "and it is all though the Earl's influence that it was ever offered to these two, you know, mother."

Mrs Meynell laughed contemptuously.

"Oh, it is delightful enough, no doubt, to be obliged to go right out to India, and then settle down in a merchant's office in the end!" she sneered. "I wish, though, now that I had not let you see so much of them. But you have always been wilful, even from a baby."

Fern tossed back her head, and looked at her mother with flashing eyes.

"Our friendship has been the only perfectly pleasant thing in my life," she cried, with something like a sob in her voice.

"Indeed, miss! Well, that's a nice thing for any young lady to tell her mother. I wonder you're not ashamed to sit there so boldly and talk like that of two young men, Fern."

The girl continued her mending steadily, although the hot blood rose in her cheeks; and, as she made no answer, Mrs. Meynell went on speaking again after a pause.

"However they will soon be off now, and then I suppose they will remain away. Afterwards perhaps you'll come to your senses again, and find there's as much good in your own kith and kin as you can discover elsewhere."

"And you will put off the party for this once? Do, mother!"

There was a gleam of hope lingering yet in the dark gray eyes as she raised them again, and looked entreatingly into the elder lady's cold, bad-tempered face.

"I dare say! Have all the place declaring that I was laying myself out to catch one of them for you. Such a charming catch as it would be too!" returned Mrs. Meynell coarsely.

"Don't!" exclaimed Fern flushing more vividly than before, and for an instant covering her cheeks with her hands.

"Why not? It's of no good mincing matters. And I'm perfectly certain that that is what would be the talk. I suppose that even you would scarcely like that?"

Fern shook her head. There was a lump in her throat which prevented her from speaking.

"Besides, you unkind, undutiful girl, your dear father will be exactly fifty-one years old. How could I allow so important an occasion to go by unmarked? No, Fern, Swift Levick and Ernest Hamilton shall both have invitations, I promise you. They'll be sure to come too, for it will be such an opportunity for saying good-bye to a lot of their friends. But, as to altering the day, let me hear no more of such nonsense!"

And as just then the master of the house appeared, followed by an incursion of about half-a-dozen youngsters, the conversation dropped. Fern understood her step-mother too well even to attempt to renew it.

And so it came about that the brilliant first of July sunshine—people said that Mrs. Meynell somehow always did contrive to secure fine weather—poured down upon a bright scene of moving figures, green turf and fragrant flowers, upon the lawn and in the garden of Somerlea Cottage.

It was, after all, rather a pleasant affair. Nearly all those present were more or less conscious of displaying a virtuous condescension by putting in an appearance at all; for Mrs. Meynell's invitations had been, as usual, issued only to the elite of the neighborhood. Possessing this delightful conviction of goodness, every one was of course in a charming temper, and beamed benignly upon the rest of the world.

Then too, although the house was small and still unpretentious, in spite of all Mrs. Meynell's attempts after what she called "style" and other people thought vulgarity, the garden was really delightful.

It abounded in big old trees and shady corners, spidery arbors and sweet old-fashioned flowers, seldom nowadays seen in such perfection.

There was space for tennis, as well as for any number of flirtations and even for a little sensible conversation, so that every one, old and young, was satisfied. And thus, although every-body wondered how on earth she managed it, Mrs. Meynell's garden-party this year—as usual—proved a great success.

It was an undeniable fact however that the hostess herself looked anything but happy or amiable.

"So aggravating of that stupid Fern!" she whispered to Miss Dent, the doctor's sister, a maiden lady of youthful manners and uncertain age, but one of her most intimate cronies." So provoking of the child! Goodness knows she's plain enough at all times! But to-day she had made herself a frightful object, crying all night because those two men are going to India."

"Well, for my part, my dear, I think it a very good thing for her that they are off at last. They could neither of them have afforded to marry and support a wife. But certain it is that, if they had hung about her much longer, one or other of them would have proposed."

"Young idiots!" snapped Mr. Meynell viciously.

"Well, I'm not so sure. You see, after a year or two of matrimony there'd have been the chance to run away and leave Fern, with perhaps two or three children, upon your hands!"

"I should like to have caught any one at that game!" Mrs. Meynell retorted grimly. "But there's no fear of any such kind of thing now. I wish she would show herself, though. There's Fred Courthope looking everywhere for her. I suppose she is ashamed to appear; and perhaps it is as well she should keep out of sight until she's decent to behold."

"Fred Courthope!" ejaculated Miss Dent breathlessly.

Her friend smiled a little and nodded.

"She might have him to-morrow if only she'd take a little trouble about it. Whatever men see in the girl I can't imagine. Put her and Clarice side by side, now! Still she does get on with them, there's no doubt, and Fred would be a good match."

"I should think so," agreed Miss Dent, who had not yet got over her surprise. "Why, he has ten thousand a year, I do verily believe!"

"Oh, quite that!" returned the other, as though the sum named were but a trifle. "But what a time you have kept me talking, dear! There is tea, and I don't like anyone to see after it but myself!"

So, relieved in mind by her grumble, and pleased with Letitia for her appreciative reception of her news, which was perfectly correct, Mrs. Meynell went off in a happier state of mind to take up a position at the little table placed just inside the open drawing-room window.

It was as well perhaps for the continuance of her peace that she could not see and did not guess what was at that moment taking place at the other side of the house, under the old pear-tree in the kitchen-garden.

"Fern, how tired you look, dear! Have you been wearing yourself out with preparations for this affair?"

They were sitting upon the wooden seat, shilted to-day behind the clustering pea-vines, and just within the shade of the pear-tree.

The speaker was dark, with short hair and big gray eyes, which however were not in the least like those others looking back into them.

Fern's were rather small and almost black. In his there was more than a tinge of blue, which in certain shades turned to a deep violet.

Swift Levick's blue-gray eyes were very pleasant to look at, and it is just possible that they had made more havoc amongst the girls of his acquaintance than ever their owner knew.

Had it not been that the Vicar's son was decidedly short he would have been the possessor of half the hearts in the country. As it was, however, several young women thought more about him than was at all desirable for their own ease of mind.

At his words a sob rose to Fern Meynell's throat, and she caught her breath audibly.

"Hateful party that it is! And the very day before—— Oh, Swift, what shall I do without my two brothers?"

The tears brimmed over, and ran down the pale cheeks.

The young man said nothing, only touched caressingly the soft chestnut hair which was almost her only beauty. He looked nearly ready to cry himself, but that his companion, with her face buried in her pocket-handkerchief, could not be expected to see.

"Don't you care? Aren't you sorry?" she burst out at last, after the silence had lasted some minutes.

"Care? Of course I care!" he returned a little sullenly, and kicking the ground with the toe of his boot. This seemed to afford some vent for his feelings, for he pursued the occupation vigorously, while he continued in a deep, low voice—"I'll tell you how much, Fern, only I dare not."

Never was there a more childish girl of twenty than Miss Meynell, in spite of all her step-mother's efforts to the contrary. Possibly too the sisterly manner in which she had hitherto regarded Swift helped further to blind her.

At any rate she did not in the least comprehend the hint his words conveyed. She only shook her head disconsolately, whilst she wiped away the tears which would still persist in trickling down.

"It can't be as much as I do! Only think how lonely I shall be! Oh, Swift, Swift!"

And with that there was a fresh outburst of weeping. Fern, as Mrs. Meynell had truly observed to Miss Dent, was always plain.

Now her crying had made her nose red and her cheeks white, and she was positively almost ugly. But to the man who had known her from childhood she was still a sweet and familiar thing—just the dear, gentle, loving and lovable Fern, who had always been to him the embodiment of everything pure and good. And he was going to leave her.

"Don't speak of what you don't understand," he said, roughly. "All I ask you only think of me as a brother. I really believe that you are crying now quite as much for Ernest as for me. Whilst I—why, I love you, Fern! I am longing now—now at this very moment—to take you into my arms and never to let you go again. I love you—love you, Fern! So now do you understand that I care?"

The tears were all dried by this time. The rush of hot blood to her cheeks had scorched up in a moment those cooling drops.

Her hands were hanging loosely down in front, her eyes were fixed intently upon the hole Swift had made in the path. At last, as he paused, she raised them. There then was a puzzled expression in them, as she looked straight into his face.

"I—never—thought—of that," she whispered, with a pause between each word, and so softly that even he could hardly hear.

"No. And I would not have vexed you now, sweet one, by telling you, only that your dear miserable face was too much for me. But, Fern"—and he laid both hands heavily upon her shoulders, regarding her innocent countenance with a very genuine look of passion—"Fern, it is true, every word of it! Darling," he murmured, "is it possible that you—oh, Fern, could you tell me that you care for me? I never dreamed that I should really ask you. I am too poor to think of such happiness as having

you for my wife. But now that I have ventured so far I must go a little farther. I must know."

Until that moment, with all her shrinking modesty, she had not lowered her eyes. Now a sudden fit of shyness overwhelmed her, and she hid her burning face in her hands.

"I cannot tell you, Swift. I never thought of that," she repeated, bending her head still lower, as though to hide herself from him.

But this man was no laggard in love. She had not repulsed him, and that was encouragement enough.

With a quick unexpected movement he passed his arm around her waist, and drew her close to his breast. Then, with the other hand, he captured her fingers baring her crimson cheeks.

"Think now, then, my love. You do, I believe—you do care for me a little! It is more than you love Ernest, after all?"

The fingers struggled in his grasp, but he held them tightly. A little smile was curling the lips underneath his moustache by this time.

"Is it?"

She nodded.

"And more than any one else in the wide world, Fern."

She tried to hide her face on his shoulder and so avoid his gaze. But even so much grace he would not allow. She must make a complete confession.

"Is it too much joy to give me, dear? I am not afraid to declare that there is no one in all the universe I love in comparison with you. Won't you say 'yes?'"

"Yes"—very faintly.

"And you will wait for me until I come back a rich man?"

This time she did not succeed in wrenching away her hands. But it was only because he had taken her whole self into his arms, whilst he waited for an answer. Then, as none came, he delayed no longer, but stole it straight from her lips.

Ten minutes later, Ernest Hamilton straying that way, heard voices.

"At last!" he exclaimed, turning the corner suddenly, and thereby catching his friend in the very act of kissing Fern again.

At the sight, Lord Somerton's nephew stood as if turned to stone. A vague wonder as to how long it was since one of them had kissed her before passed, oddly enough, through his mind, together with a strange recollection of butterfly kisses of childish days.

Swift was perfectly equal to the occasion, however.

"Oh, Ernest, come and congratulate me! She says she will be my wife some day. I can go to India now with a happy heart indeed."

As though he could not contain himself with his joy, he wrung his friend's hand, and then, heedless of observation, again touched, with his own, the lips of his betrothed.

Ernest, very pale, staggered backwards against the trunk of the old tree. For an instant, however, the lovers were too entirely engrossed with each other to notice him, and in that moment he recovered himself.

"I had no idea of it," he said, rather incoherently, but with tolerable composure—"none whatever. But I do congratulate you, dear old man! May you both be happy."

Then he turned his back upon them and strolled away.

Fern stared after him rather disconsolately. Since she was six and the two friends nine there had never been a pleasure which all three had not shared equally. But now, when the supremest joy of all had come, Ernest seemed cast out.

Swift too was vexed for a moment. He was struck with astonishment at Ernest's curt words and abrupt departure.

For an instant a horrible suspicion crossed his mind, but that was dismissed at once.

"Of course he would have told me if he had cared for her," he concluded, totally forgetting that, without doubt, Ernest would have believed the same of Swift himself.

And, thus reassuring himself, he gave his whole attention to calling back the smile to Fern's face, and the happiness to her eyes.

So to each other the two were for the time content.

As for that remaining member of the hitherto united trio, he took his nearly broken heart, and the wound in it at which nobody guessed, back to the Vicarage, and there finished his packing.

The rest of the day was not a time of unalloyed happiness even to Fern and Swift. Until the guests had all departed indeed they did maintain their delightful and discreet retirement behind the peavines.

When, however, the last carriage had rolled away—when even the indefatigable Letitia had betaken herself homewards—they emerged with their story.

But to describe the dire tribulation which then and there overtook Mrs. Meynell is beyond the power of words.

Even at the first moment and in Swift's presence she did not hesitate to "speak her mind." And when once the garden-gate had slammed behind him she poured out the full torrent of her wrath.

"If it had even been Ernest now, there would have been more sense in it. He is at least a gentleman, and with but three lives between him and an earldom. But Swift Lovick—why he is nothing more than the son of a poverty-stricken little country parson!" wailed the bookseller's daughter, who had entrapped the younger son of a baronet into matrimony.

"I have always been taught, mother, that clergymen's sons were gentlemen," retorted the girl, holding her head very high indeed, in defence of the lover who had just departed with her first shy kiss upon his lips.

"Oh, so they may be in theory! But give me money and position."

Her husband, who was sitting in the room, smiled a little to himself. Happily for him the lady did not observe it.

"It is true," she went on, with the most sentimental of all her many airs, "that I have been condemned to wear out my days in poverty, which is a very different thing from what I expected upon my wedding-day. But that only makes me the more anxious to shield any one of those in whom I take an interest from such a fate."

"Good night, father. I think I'll go to bed," said Fern wearily, during the silence that ensued.

"Oh, of course you are in a hurry because I choose to point out your folly. If I were your father I would stop the affair altogether. There is Fred Courthope and all his money that you might have had by holding out a finger. And then you take up with this young pauper—you wretched, wicked girl, you."

The woman almost foamed with the anger she felt.

But, under the shelter of the storm of words, Fern's father had kissed her warmly enough.

He was weak and idle and poor, but he loved his daughter, all that now remained to him of the earlier happiness of his life, and for once was determined to resist his wife.

"Good night, my child; sleep soundly," he whispered. "You have my consent."

So Fern went up stairs with a lighter heart to the room she shared with pretty Clarice, he sixteen-year-old half-sister, the pet and pride of Mrs. Meynell's soul.

Lying there by the child's side, with wide-open eyes and throbbing pulse, her previous life passed before her like a picture.

Every incident of her childish days and of her girlish happiness seemed to crowd up on her mind. She had never realised before how many memories twenty years may contain.

There, among the rest, she saw herself as a tiny child of six, taken blackberrying by Swift and Ernest, between three and four years her senjors.

She could trace out the course of the tripie friendship which had sprung up, only increasing and strengthening with their growth.

The Vicar's son and the Vicar's orphan pupil had been more to her than any brothers. And now she had promised to marry one of them, the one she had always loved the best. Yet to-morrow both must leave her.

It was still early the next day when the adieux had to be said, and the parting, which was to all three most painful, had to be borne.

Then Ernest and Swift turned their backs upon the place which held all their dearest remembrances and brightest hopes. By the time the sun was setting they stood together upon the deck of the "Amazon," and knew that in an hour they would be off.

"Telegram, Mr. Hamilton!"

The words sounded clearly enough above the surrounding din; and Ernest started forward to take the telegram.

Over his shoulder, according to the old brotherly custom, Swift read the words which had been dispatched in all haste by the earl's agent.

"Lord Somerton and his two sons drowned off the Skolch coast. Pray return at once to Somerlea."

For some seconds the two men remained staring at the announcement in silence. Swift was the first to rouse himself to speak.

"Then you are Lord Somerton, old fellow."

"What an awful thing! The father and two sons. "Oh, Swift, it is terrible!"

"Still there is no doubt that you must go ashore at once, man." Then, as his friend stood apparently still dazed with the shock—"Here, I'll see to sending your traps back for you. Rouse yourself, Ernest. There is really not a particle of time to spare."

He gave his orders rapidly, and saw them executed. Then once more the chums of many years stood together, for parting words must be said.

"Good-bye, dear old fellow. There is not a minute to spare. You must be off!" exclaimed Swift, the more composed of the two, holding Ernest's hand all the while, and bringing out his words in jerks.

"But you will be alone. I can't leave you. Think of the years we have been together, Swift."

The other laughed rather huskily.

"I shall never forget. But you will be happy enough in a little time. You are going back to riches and to her." Strong man as he was, his voice trembled. It did seem hard!

"Going back to riches. I declare I never thought of that. Of course you shan't go either. I shall have enough for all three of us. Come home with me, Swift, and make her happy," Ernest entreated.

But Swift shook his head.

"Do you think I could live on my money, dear fellow? No, not even to marry Fern. Besides she will wait for me. I can trust her. And I shall be all the happier for the knowledge that you are near her."

One of the ship's officers laid his hand upon Ernest's arm.

"If you mean to go ashore, sir," he said, "you must not delay."

There was but a second to clasp hands and take a last long steady look.

"Good-bye, old man. Luck go with you! You might have stayed and made us happy."

"Good-bye, Ernest—good-bye. Off with you! Remember I trust her with you."

In ten minutes more Lord Somerton stood upon the quay, straining his eyes in the deepening gloom to catch a final glimpse of the steamer which was carrying away his friend.

"I have never failed you yet: and even in this you may trust me," he murmured. Then he turned away to return to the hotel.

CHAPTER II.

SOMERLEA CASTLE stood within a mile of the small village bearing the same name.

The walls of the park which surrounded it indeed extended almost as far as the commencement of the little street, with its one row of dingy shops, its small church and pretty parsonage, and its solitary house boasting a brass plate upon the door, which of course belonged to the doctor—almost, but not quite, the dividing space being occupied by that lovely garden appertaining to Somerlea Cottage, which was at once the pride of Mrs. Meynell's heart and the joy of her step-daughter Fern's existence.

It would therefore almost be like going home to the young Earl to take up his abode within a mile of the Vicarage where so many of his youthful days had been passed.

Almost like going home to know that Fern, who had ever been like his sister, and who was now the betrothed of his dearest friend, lived but just outside his own gates, down to which at any moment he might stroll and meet her.

Almost like going home, although, owing to his uncle's strange whim, he had never yet been allowed to cross the threshold of the Castle.

And yet, when at last all his business in London—where, instead of at Somerlea, he had chosen to meet the agent—was settled, when the late Earl's will had been opened and read, and his successor was at liberty to go where he liked, he still remained for a while in town, much to the surprise of the village gossips.

But Lord Somerton did not deceive himself as to the reason of his delay. Nothing had occurred to compel his presence at Somerlea since the day when, together, he and Swift had turned their backs upon it and started upon the travels which, for him at any rate, were so soon to end.

There had not even been a funeral. Not one of the bodies, either of the father or of the two sons, had been recovered, although the yacht had capsized actually within sight of land, and the death of all was an assured fact. Thus there had been no actual necessity for Ernest to overcome the dread which had gradually grown up within him.

"I cannot go back, where I may see her," he told himself again and again.

So he remained away from the place, which however was, notwithstanding his efforts to the contrary, never out of his thoughts.

But all this the old lawyer who had been agent for the property for many years could not be supposed to understand, and he never ceased his endeavours to induce the young man to take up his residence in the Castle.

"Absentee landowners are bad for any place, be it in England or in Ireland, my lord," he said one day with a smile. "And no Earl has stayed at the place for the last twenty years, to my certain knowledge."

"And who could wonder at that? At least, if the inside is at all like the outside," retorted its owner.

"Well, it is a great dull house my lord, I don't deny. But still there are ways to make it pleasant enough, there's no doubt. A wife now, if your lordship will pardon me for suggesting it, murmured the other, who had known him from boyhood.

"I shall never marry."

"But indeed, Lord Somerton, it is your duty. You must forgive me for reminding you of it, but you are the last of the line. At your decease the title will lapse, unless——But what am I talking about? There's plenty of time yet to see you the father of half-a-dozen sons before that day."

"You need not reckon on it, Mr. Ward, for I mean what I say. I shall never marry." the young man repeated firmly.

And, hearing the impressive tone, the old man looked grave and said no more.

Had he but known it however, his words had taken a strong hold upon his client's mind. It was not long before the young Earl began to ask himself why, after all, he should not take a wife.

Why should he not be happy as other men of his own rank in life? Where was the use of crying over spilt milk, and staying moping in London, out of the season and where nobody that he knew at that time of year?

Would it not be far better to go down and enjoy himself and his possessions amongst the people who already loved him? He was not obliged to see anything of Fern. Indeed he would take all possible means to avoid her.

Why should he allow one woman to spoil his whole life? He would face the thing out and go home. And go he did, reaching the Castle just two months after it had become his own.

In the meantime things had not been progressing so smoothly at the Cottage as might have been desired.

The news that Ernest Hamilton had by one stroke become Earl of Somerton had changed Mrs. Meynell, for the time being, from a scold into a martyr.

Morning, noon, and night poor Fern had to listen to her step-mother's moans and groans over her own perversity and self-will, and, which was far harder to bear—over Swift's poverty, and his selfishness in having made her promise to wait for him.

"Of course Ernest cared for you just as much as the other. And he was always so nice. Why, I should have been charmed to welcome him for a son-in-law, quite irrespective of money or position," she used to declare again and again, entirely oblivious of any previous statements of a totally different nature, possibly even believing that what she at present said was correct. "But now that he has come into the earldom —— Ah, Fern, what your folly has lost for you!"

"At any rate I have gained the love of a good man," retorted the girl one day, shortly after Lord Somerton's arrival at the Castle.

"Oh, yes, of course! And that's all you think of, as I might have known. Just what I have gained! Is it nothing to you, you selfish creature, what you might have done for your brothers and sisters, and even for your father and me, in such a position as that Lord Somerton could have given you?"

Fern, exasperated, sprang to her feet and stamped. She was not by any means a good-tempered girl.

"Could I guess that he was likely to come into the earldom? Not that I should have refused Swift, or acted at all differently, even if I had," she admitted in a lower tone.

She threw herself down again restlessly into a basket-chair close to the window, resting her elbows on the sill, and gazing, with a far-away yearning look in her eyes, up into the rapidly darkening sky. No one sympathised with the heart-hunger and intense loneliness that weighed upon the girl in those days, or noticed that she was growing pale and thin.

"Of course you wouldn't. I am perfectly aware of the fact, miss, without having the information given me over again. Where's the good of snowing more and more of your own unreasonableness? I wish, for my part, that you were not so fond of talking of the young man. It doesn't seem to me proper to show how glad you are to have a lover at last. As though you were the only engaged girl in the world!"

Which was hard upon Fern all around; but especially because it was her great desire and endeavor to keep the subject of Swift out of all conversation with Mrs. Meynell, who was herself invariably the person to introduce it.

"I do think the Earl might have called by this time, though," the elderly lady went on. "Apparently, however, he shares your opinion, Fern, that your new parents are of far more importance than ourselves."

"Why?"

"Why? Why, because I saw him go down to the Vicarage—positively past this door—this morning, and yet he has never come near us. And he has been at the Castle for two whole days! Oh, it's you that have done it all, of course! I don't blame him, poor fellow."

"Me? How?" gasped Fern ungrammatically, in her wonder.

Although for worlds she would not have confessed it, she was also feeling a good deal of surprise at his conduct, especially as he must know that she wanted to hear all that he could tell her about his last moments with Swift.

"He doesn't care to look at you now that you're promised to some one else. That's all about it, you may depend," her step-mother said savagely, going a good deal nearer the mark than she herself at all realized perhaps.

Fern made no response to the accusation.

Her eyes had been opened by Swift to the possibility that those brothers of her childhood might become the lovers of her womanhood, and she too had gained some inkling of Ernest's passion.

It was in silence that she now rose and went away to pace up and down in the deepening twilight, underneath the boughs of the pear-tree, and over the spot which to her was the most sacred place on earth.

There she used to spend long hours meditating upon the looks and words and hopes of her absent lover.

To-night these were mingled with a good deal of wonder at the behavior of his friend.

"Even if Ernest did care for me, he should have seen before Swift went away that he must get over it. He can't all of a sudden want to stop being my brother. Unless"—with a start and a sudden thought. Then clasping her hands—"Oh, I do hope that becoming an Earl won't have spoiled him and made him proud! He has always been such a dear old fellow."

But when weeks flew by and still, except for a formal call when every one was out, and which Mr. Meynell returned with equal state, the new Earl of Somerton never came near the house, the same idea occurred to other minds.

"Don't fret, my girl," said her father to Fern one evening, after he and his wife had been discussing the matter. "Of course it come hard upon you who have always been like his sister. But, after all, it's just human nature, and nothing but what might have been expected."

By and by a whisper began to make itself heard in Somerlea.

The new Earl, who of course must be looking out for a wife, was paying marked attention to Evangeline Harcourt, the daughter of Colonel Harcourt of Hatton Hall, and a most fit and proper person to be a Countess—at least so all the gossips declared.

Certainly, as far as appearances went, nothing more stately or noble could well be desired in an Earl's wife.

So indeed thought his lordship himself

as he rode by her side one brilliant autumn morning, glancing down every now and then into the handsome, rather massive face so often turned in his direction.

They were a noble-looking couple—he tall and dark, with curly hair worn unusually long, a distinguished-looking countenance in which the sensitive mouth and expressive pale blue eyes were the most noticeable features; she also tall and rather large generally, but with a perfect figure, remarkably small hands and feet, a beautifully clear complexion, rich golden hair, and—which set the distinctive mark to her loveliness—deep brown eyes, with nearly black eyebrows and lashes.

Lord Somerton took in every detail, regarding her critically as she sat squarely upon her iron-gray mare. Then he told himself that she was all that man's heart could desire.

He believed, too, that he could have her for the asking. Moreover he almost intended to make his petition that very same bright day. And yet he sighed.

"Poor fellow!" She spoke in her melodious contralto voice, and looked laughingly into the grave face as the sound fell upon her ear. The sun was caught and reflected in her glorious eyes, and her companion could but smile back in reply. "Would you not like to tell me what was the matter?" she asked, after a momentary pause.

"Oh, nothing! I was only thinking."

"When I think I don't sigh," retorted the girl, looking around her and visibly rejoicing in her own vitality and glowing health. "Why should you either, Lord Somerton? You have everything to make you content."

"I suppose we all cry for the moon sometimes—which, Miss Harcourt, goes to prove that we are but children of an older growth."

"But what is your particular moon—you who have everything? Riches, a lovely place, a great name——"

"They none of them give happiness," he answered.

"What would then?"

Once more his eyes wandered over her—noting her frank, honest expression, her dainty riding-habit the perfection of her attitude.

He felt that most men in his place would have replied by the simple word "Yourself." And yet he could not bring himself to say it. Instead he responded abruptly, without removing his gaze—

"They say that I ought to marry."

He saw and almost wondered at the hot flush which dyed her face from brow to chin.

"I should think it can scarcely matter what they say unless you agree with them," she rejoined rather haughtily, and turning her head away from him. "You are certainly the best judge upon such a matter."

The Earl must surely have been a little mad that day. He went on almost mechanically—

"But for the title and the estate. If I were to die, you know, there would be no one to inherit. They tell me—the lawyers do—that it would be well if I had a son and heir."

Miss Harcourt gave once glance of pure astonishment at him. Then she burst into a ringing laugh. That roused him a little, and he joined in the laugh, not in the least knowing why.

It did pass through his mind however that this was scarcely the way to commence the offer of marriage which he was almost intending. Still perhaps it was as well that she should have some idea of the real feeling of his heart. But by this time the lady had finished laughing, and was speaking.

"I'm afraid you will think me rather illmannered, but positively I could not help it! You are really the first man that I ever met who gave out, as a solemn reason for being unhappy, that he had no one to whom to leave his possessions."

Lord Somerton laughed again.

"I think you exaggerate a little, Miss Harcourt," he said.

"No. At least I'm sure it is what any one would have understood you to mean," she retorted. "But, come, let us have a gallop. You seemed to me just now to be talking in your sleep. That will wake you up."

She shook her reins, and struck her mare sharply with her riding-whip. The beautiful creature, as handsome in her own way as her mistress, responded willingly enough, and for some minutes they skimmed along the level road too rapidly for any connected conversation.

But in those few minutes, watching the grace and dignity with which Evangeline sat and managed her spirited steed, noticing the gleam of her hair as here and there a stray sunbeam glinted down between the branches of the trees and fell upon it, and still hearing in his brain the echoes of her hearty, genuine mirth, the Earl made up his mind.

When, after a time, the horses slackened, gradually resuming a more sober pace, Lord Somerton assured himself that his hour had come.

"You asked me a little while ago what would make me happy," he began, drawing close to her side, and laying his hand upon her rein.

She showed her gleaming white teeth in another laugh.

"And did you not tell me?"

But he was grave enough now. He had taken his resolve at last, and he would not again give himself a chance of changing.

"No, you know I did not! As you said just now, I was talking in my sleep. I was dreaming—dreaming of you, Eva."

It was the first time he had so called her. Her color rose in a crimson wave, her heart beat violently, her head shook as she leaned forward and with it stroked her horse's neck—for she loved the young Earl.

And he? He had merely said the word because somehow it seemed absurd to call a girl whom he was upon the point of asking to become his wife, "Miss Harcourt." And thus far apart in spirit, they rode onward side by side. Yet still he could not compel himself to utter the decisive word. Still he dallied a little longer on the brink.

"Do you ever dream?" he asked suddenly.

She sat upright at the odd question, the blood receding slowly from her cheeks.

"Sometimes."

"And what are your dreams like?"

She shook her head.

"Tell me first of yours," she almost whispered.

"Of mine? My day-dream, dear?" He bent nearer to her, warming at last to the task. "I have said it had to do with you, Eva."

"But what about me?"

She did not raise her eyes, and, as he noted how fair she was in her almost timid modesty, and how the long dark lashes curled upon her soft fair skin, the blood coursed faster through his veins.

The horses were just rounding a curve in the road as he went on—

"I was wondering how I should tell you that—— Ah!"

She turned towards him in alarm. What was there in that group of children, surrounding a plain-looking girl in a shabby cotton dress, to call forth such an exclamation?

But even before her glance had reached him Lord Somerton had realized that sentence would never be completed. For at last his destiny had brought him face to face with Fern again. And even as their eyes met he knew that none but she could ever be his wife.

In an instant, with a word of apology to his astonished companion, he sprang from his horse, flinging the reins to the groom, and went up to Fern with outstretched hand.

"Were you going to cut me?" he asked her, trying to speak lightly, but feeling that the color had died out of his face.

"Have you not 'cut' me for many weeks, Lord Somerton?" she responded almost sternly. Still she gave her hand to the man who had been like her brother.

He bent down and whispered close to her ear, so that none of all that tribe of youngsters, clustering around with wondering eyes and opened-mouthed, should hear him.

"Could you not trust me, dear? But I have something now that I must say to you, Fern. Will you meet me in the park, under the holly?"

"When?"

She asked the question as a matter of course. Such appointments between herself and those quasi-brothers of hers used to be as common as the daylight.

"At four o'clock to-day?"

"Very well. But you must not stay at present. See Miss Harcourt is waiting for you."

"Bother Miss Harcourt!"

But he went.

She watched him, as he remounted, with a happier smile than had been on her face for weeks. After all, Ernest had not quite forsaken her.

Then, as the horses moved off, she continued her dull walk with the little children.

At the same moment Miss Harcourt was asking the question that sealed her fate, which, however, had been decided before then.

"Who was that very plain, common-looking girl you seemed to know so well, Lord Somerton?"

CHAPTER III.

FERN MEYNELL could never by any chance have been considered handsome, or even pretty. Her mouth was too large, and her eyes too small, and her nose too short, and her forehead too high, to allow her of being anything but a plain woman.

Yet her adopted brothers had never really discovered her lack of beauty, possibly because of her ready smile and winning ways.

Certainly as she started that afternoon—which, little as she thought it, was to be the turning point of her life—to meet Lord Somerton, she looked sweet and tempting enough to please any man's fancy.

She was wearing a pretty soft-looking gown of gray cashmere, with touches of sapphire blue in the hat and in the dainty handkerchief tucked into the bodice. There was a gleam of gold at her throat, and her hands were encased in a pair of long gray gloves.

She had wondered, as she gave a final peep into the looking-glass, whether Lord Somerton would be enough like the Ernest of old to compliment her upon her "fetching get-up." She knew that her costume merited it.

There was a deeper color than usual in her cheeks, too, which did not by any means detract from her small share of good looks, although it had been brought there by such an unpleasant means as Mrs. Meynell's waspish tongue.

For Fern, in the innocence of her heart, had made no secret of her appointment, of which her step-mother had, therefore, heard.

The lady had then at once taken upon herself to give utterance to some sharp words about girls running after young noblemen who looked down upon their families, and as to one lover at a time having been considered enough in her youth. All of which Fern resented strongly and vainly.

By the time that she reached the rendezvous, however, the fresh air had driven away her vexation, as well as added to the becoming flush, and it was a very happy looking maiden that Lord Somerton saw approaching him along the green vista formed by the tall shrubs.

The place of meeting was not a single holly-bush, but a clump standing together, of which the lower branches had been so cut away as to form a good-sized arbor beneath.

This was situated almost in the centre of the park, about midway between the gate and the castle. It was shut out from observation by the pines and laurels growing in all directions.

The spot had been a favorite one with Fern ever since the occasion when Swift had run with her upon his back and hidden her there away from her nurse during a whole long summer day, feeding her upon hard biscuits and strawberries.

She had been but seven years old then, and now she was twenty, yet in all that time she had never found cause to alter her opinion that it was one of the sunniest, laziest, most comfortable localities in all the wide world.

It was only because he knew exactly in what direction to look for her between the branches that the Earl caught sight of her before she was close upon him.

As it was however he was able for some minutes to enjoy watching her gradually advancing form, with the knowledge that now, at last, for an hour, or even perhaps longer, he should have her all to himself.

He did not go forward to welcome her. He assured himself that those few quiet moments were necessary to enable him to greet her with calmness. Yet when at last she reached his side and laid her fingers in his he could hardly speak. For, whilst he had imagined that he was growing collected, his excitement had as matter of fact been increasing each second.

Thus it was that their meeting took place in a profound silence which seemed strange to both of them. At last Fern drew away her hand, at the same time looking into her companion's face and saying reproachfully—

"Why have you been so unkind, Ernest?"

"Unkind?" he responded breathlessly.

"Why, of course! You must have known how much I wanted to see you. You have been perpetually past our door to the Vicarage. Mrs. Levick has told me often of your visits; whilst I——"

"Hush, Fern!" he murmured, almost inarticulately. But Fern's feelings upon the subject had been almost stronger than she herself had understood.

"No, I won't hush," she said, growing excited with the narration of her wrongs and giving the energetic stamp which Mrs. Meynell was never tired of citing as one of her step-daughter's many bad habits—"I won't hush! You must tell me why you have left me alone all this long time or else I will never have anything to say to you again!"

The young man left her side and began to pace up and down the open space before the arbor.

His head was bent forward and his arms were folded. Fern seated herself upon the wooden bench underneath the holly and waited.

At last he came and stood in front of her, holding out both his hands. She put hers into them with but a single questioning word—

"Well?"

"You must trust me, Fern—that is all I can say. I did it for the best."

The girl turned away from him angrily.

"Oh! And what am I to understand by that? Was it for me or for yourself that it was best?"

"For me, Fern."

"Quite so! That's exactly what I thought, but I am glad you are honest enough to confess it. I was good enough to be Ernest Hamilton's sister, but the Earl of Somerton is an entirely different person! However"—springing to her feet and standing like a fury, with flushing eyes—"your lordship need have no further anxiety or trouble about the matter. I will never come near you or speak to you again."

He caught her by her arm as she turned indignantly away.

"How can you be such a goose, Fern? If there had really been anything of that sort in my mind why should I have asked you to meet me here to-day?" he said, trying to force a laugh.

"Take your hand off me, Lord Somerton, please, and remember that my name is Miss Meynell to you for the future!"—drawing herself to her full height and speaking as haughtily as ever Miss Harcourt could have done.

"Nonsense, child! As though you could ever be anything but Fern to me! And if I let go you will run away, you know."

"I do not precisely understand how you can like to detain me against my wish, Lord Somerton. And with my own will you shall never be molested by my company for another minute. I am at least a lady, and not humble enough to care about a man who considers himself too grand to associate with me. Release my arm!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A MAN who had been living at Hartzell, Kentucky, without a skull, died the other day five years ago, during a fit, he fell into a fire and remained there until the top of his skull was burned almost to a crisp. The doctors removed this and made an artificial covering for the brain. A thin film formed over it, and, strange to say, the man lived and retained all his faculties.

IT is a good thing to laugh, at any rate; and if a straw can tickle a man, it is an instrument of happiness.

Bric-a-Brac.

CLAY-EATERS.—The Otomacs, a people of South America, regularly consume from a pound to a pound and a half of clay per day, which satisfies their hunger without injuring their health. Among the Indians of the banks of the Amazon, clay forms a part of the daily fare, even when other food is abundant.

SNEEZING.—The Jewish Rabbins, who have a story for everything, say that before Jacob men never sneezed but once, and then immediately died; they assure us that that patriarch was the first who died by natural disease, before him all men died by sneezing; the memory of which was ordered to be preserved in all nations by a command of every prince to his subjects to employ some salutary exclamation after the act of sneezing.

A CHURNING MUSKRAT.—From a town of New York comes an artistic little dairy item to the effect that a farmer left a number of milk cans by the side of the road for a short time while he stepped over into an adjoining field to talk with a neighbor. A muskrat happened to see the cans, and, pawing the lid off one of them, crawled in and proceeded to feast to his heart's content. After drinking the milk his sides became inflated like a toy balloon. The muskrat then discovered to his horror that he could not get out of the can, and commenced frantically jumping and slashing his flat tail until the milk was churned to butter.

A JAPANESE COMEDY.—The point of a story turned on the hypocrisy of a young wife lately married to an old gentleman whom she was desirous should leave her for a while and go on his travels. When he came to tell her that it was his intention so to do, she pretended to fall a-weeping violently, but rather overdid it; and the old gentleman, suspecting that something was up—for he saw a little dish of water she kept by her side, in which she stealthily dipped now and then her pocket handkerchief, in order that it might appear it had become wringing wet with tears—substituted an ink-pot. She, not perceiving the change that had taken place, in a few minutes blackened her face most horribly; which when done, her husband brought her a metal mirror, and put her hypocrisy to an open shame.

UNDER DIPHICULTIES.—A new paper out West has started under difficulties. It tells its own story as follows: "We begin the Rocky Mountain *Cyclone* with some phew diphiculties in the way. The type phounders phrom whom we bought our outphit phor this printing ophphice phaled to supply us with any epis or cays, and it will be phour or five weex bephore we can get any. The mistaque was not phound out until a day or two ago. We have ordered the missing letters and will have to get along without them till they come. We don't lique the looxs of this variety ov spelling any better than our readers, but mistax will happened in the best regulated phamilies, and iph the ph's and c's and x's and q's hold out, we shall reep (sound the c hard) the *Cyclone* whirling apiter a phashion till the sorts arrive. It is no joque to us—it's a serious apiphair."

CATS AND BIRDS.—Cats and birds are natural enemies, but occasionally there is an instance of their hatred being turned into friendship. A French journal tells the story of a cat which rushed into the house one day, having in its mouth a sparrow, which she began playing with before devouring. The sparrow having one of its wings injured, could not escape by flying, and boldly began to attack its enemy by fierce blows on the nose with its beak. The cat seemed greatly astonished, and beat a retreat; but from that time forth the two became the warmest friends. They ate, played and slept together. Often they ran about the house, the sparrow perched on the cat's back, and sometimes gently carried in the cat's mouth, from which it was released on the slightest wish to be free. One morning after the broken wing had healed, the window was open, and the sparrow took its flight. Pussy, though missing her friend, did not die of grief, as animals sometimes do when an attachment is broken.

A WHITE ELEPHANT.—The gift or possession of a white elephant is a favorite figure of a misfortune, disaster, or catastrophe which has overtaken any one under the cover or pretence of profit, benevolence, friendship or respect. The basis of the figure is to be found in a habit referred to the king of Siam, who, when he had an enemy among his nobles whom he detested, but one whom it would not be politic to destroy publicly—one who must be despatched without long delay, but whose poison must be sweetened, and for whom the edge of the axe must be gilded—was accustomed to send him a white elephant. He was to be cared for and fed, and pampered, and adulated. All things were lawful for him, and he was to be cared for and indulged first of all the world; for he was the white elephant of royal favoring, to be received with gratitude and maintained with cost. In the end the expense of keeping him would be so inordinate that the receiver would be ruined and commit suicide, the white elephant having proved as efficacious for punishment as a bowstring or a bowl of deadly poison.

CONGRESSMAN LAWLER is a philosopher. It was he who originated the famous saying, worthy of Seneca, morals or "Poor Richard's Almanac." Said Mr. Lawler: "Gentleman, you should not get impatient with nature. All things equalize themselves—the rich man gets his ice in summer and the poor man gets his in winter."

THIS IS ALL.

BY R. C.

Just a saunter in the twilight,
Just a whisper in the hall,
Just a sail on sea or river,
Just a dance at rout or ball,
Just a glance that hearts enthrall—
This is all—and this is all.

Just a few harsh words of doubting,
Just a silence proud and cold,
Just a spiteful breath of slander,
Just a wrong that is not told,
Just a word beyond recall—
This is all—and this is all.

Just a life robbed of its brightness,
Just a heart by sorrow filled,
Just a faith that trusts no longer,
Just a love by doubting chilled,
Just a few hot tears that fall—
This is all—ah! this is all.

FOR LOVE OF HER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X III—(CONTINUED.)

THE formal business of the court was quickly over, and just as it was concluded Doctor Blake came in and sat down near the door.

Old Baxter himself was the first witness called, and gave his evidence in a blunt, straightforward manner.

He deposed to having found the body of the unfortunate keeper early on the morning of the previous day, among the bracken, at a little distance from his cottage.

"What do you call a little distance?" one of the jurymen asked, curiously.

"It was about a quarter of a mile, sir."

"Was he dead when—when you found him?"

"I thought he was at first, but he still breathed, and we carried him into the house."

"Did you see his gun?"

"Yes, it was lying about ten feet from him."

"Was it loaded?"

"No, sir."

"Ah. Did he recover consciousness before he died?"

"I can't rightly tell, sir. He opened his eyes wide and muttered something, but I really don't think he knew what he was saying."

"He could give you no information as to how he came by the wound which caused his death?"

"No, sir."

"Have you formed any opinion of your own on the subject?"

"I can't rightly say as I have, sir, unless, as I suppose, the poachers did it."

"But if I am not mistaken, the bullet which was extracted from the wound is one which fits his own gun and mould?"

"I believe that is so," Baxter answered quietly; "and although it is not a point to be depended on, seeing that there are many moulds of the same size, I reckon; it just bears out what I say. The rascals struggled with poor Joe, got the gun from him, and shot him."

"The gun might have gone off in the struggle?"

"That's so."

"Were there any evidences of a struggle?"

"The bracken was trampled somewhat."

"Do you think the body was lying where it had fallen?"

"I do not, sir. There was a pool of blood half-a-dozen yards away; my opinion is that he had fallen there, and they had dragged him in among the bracken to hide him."

"You were not out that night?"

"No, sir. I'd been out three nights running."

"You heard no shots during the night?"

"I slept very sound, sir, and heard nothing."

"You were well acquainted with the poor fellow, I think?"

"Yes, sir. I liked him well too; he was an honest man, was poor Joe, although he was a bit hot."

"He was a quick-tempered man?"

"Rather, and apt to do things without thinking, but good in the main."

"Impulsive, eh? Had he been at all depressed lately?"

"Not as I knows on, sir."

"You never heard him threaten to take away his own life?"

"Never, sir," emphatically.

"Was he not courting your daughter, Mr. Baxter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did she favor his suit?"

"I can't tell you, sir. I reckon she did, or I'd have known the reason why," he added after a moment.

"They had not quarreled?"

"No, sir."

"Had your daughter any other admirers?"

"None as I knows on, sir. None as came to my house."

"Has she much freedom? Do you allow her out much?"

"No, sir; her mother's a careful woman, and has brought Nell up very careful also."

"Thank you! That will do."

The witness stood down with an air of relief and satisfaction, and went back to the group of keepers and hinds from Dereham who were grouped round the door.

Doctor Blake was the next witness called; his evidence was brief and to the point, relating principally to the cause of death, which he described clearly.

Deceased had regained consciousness a few minutes before his death, and had murmured a few words, of which none of those present could make sense; at least, he could not, he said.

"You remember the words, Doctor Blake?"

"Yes! He spoke with a great effort, and disjointedly, but the words were distinct."

"What were they?"

"He uttered the girl's name, and added, 'Take care, your fault!'"

"That was all?"

"There was another word which he left unfinished; it sounded like 'paint,' and may have been—nay, probably was intended for—'painting.'"

"What makes you think that?"

Doctor Blake lifted his dark brows with a slight smile.

"Because he was looking at the portrait of the girl which hung in the room," he said coolly.

"The word might as well have been 'painter,' might not it?"

"It might, certainly."

"You extracted the bullet from the wound?"

"Yes, in conjunct on with Doctor Kinsley."

"Is Doctor Kinsley present?"

"No; he is unavoidably detained by the serious illness of a patient."

"The bullet produced is the one?"

"It looks like it. I gave it to Inspector Davis."

Inspector Davis here interposed, placing before the coroner a bullet-mould found on deceased—the mould from which the bullet was made, since it fitted perfectly.

There was no doubt in the minds of those present that the shot which had killed the young keeper had been fired from his own gun.

"Could the wound from which the deceased died have been self-inflicted, Doctor Blake?"

"Undoubtedly it could."

"Would it be possible for a man having sustained such a wound to drag himself from the place where he fell to a distance of some yards?"

"I consider it impossible."

"Is that Doctor Kinsley's opinion also?"

"It is."

"Then you do not think that deceased committed suicide?"

"I do not."

The evidence of one or two keepers followed, evidence of no importance save as confirmation of Baxter's testimony as to where the body was found, then there was a slight sensation among those present when Nell Baxter appeared in answer to her name, leaning very heavily on her mother's arm.

She was trembling very much, and deathly pale, but she answered the questions put to her calmly, although she kept her eyes fixed upon the ground.

She was dressed in black, and looked subdued and unhappy, while her beauty, so dependent as it was on her rich coloring, seemed dim and faded.

Maud Kinsley, glancing swiftly at her brother, saw that there was no compassion or sympathy on his face, only something strangely like distaste.

She had seen Joe Kirby the evening before he died, she said, in answer to the questions which were gently put; they had not quarreled, they were never on good terms, for she had not liked him, and had resented her father's favor of his suit.

On the evening in question she had hardly spoken to him, he had seemed much as usual, she thought. Yes, he was jealous—jealous of everyone who came near the lodge.

"Did he ever express jealousy about anyone in particular?"

There was no answer; the heavy lids remained downcast; the pale face did not change.

"I must ask you to answer, and truthfully," Mr. Elwood said gravely. "Did he ever show any jealousy of Mr. Arnold Graeme?"

It was only by the closest scrutiny that the look of relief which crossed the girl's face could be seen, but she answered the question without hesitation.

"Yes; he was displeased that he took my picture, but he was jealous of everyone."

"Especially of Mr. Graeme?"

"No, not especially."

"Were you expecting Mr. Graeme to meet you on the night in question?"

For the first time she lifted her eyes with an expression of astonishment. Afterwards people said how admirably she had acted her part.

"I was not," she said quietly.

"Was he not your lover?"

"He was not," Nell repeated tremulously.

"You swear it?"

"I swear it," the girl answered, and broke into a passion of hysterical tears.

As her mother led her out, Maud looked pitifully over at Graeme.

He was somewhat paler, but he was listening with quiet attention to what passed; there was no fear upon his face, no other expression but that of quiet interest. As he met her piteous glances he smiled slightly and reassuringly at her; but the girl could not return the smile.

She was lividly pale now, as pale as Gilbert himself, who was leaning back in his chair struggling with a sick faintness which threatened to overcome him.

Lord Dereham, still standing by the mantel-piece, covered his eyes for a moment with his hands, and his heart throbbed quickly, as Arnold Graeme was called as the next witness.

Very grave, composed, and manly he looked; even the slight look of effeminacy which his rather slender physique gave him had faded just then, as he turned his gray eyes inquiringly upon the jurymen who were all eagerly scrutinising him.

"Your name?"

"Arnold Graeme."

"Your age?"

"Twenty-eight."

"You are an artist?"

"I am an artist," the young man said, as if he gloried in his profession, which indeed he loved with a great love.

"You knew the deceased?"

"Hardly. I may have seen him once or twice."

"You had not had any quarrel with him?"

"Certainly not. I never exchanged twenty words with him in my life."

"On the night of the seventeenth you accompanied Doctor Kinsley to the Grange at Welford?"

"I did."

"You drove, I think?"

"Yes; we had no servant with us."

"You left Ivyholme at about a quarter to eight, I believe?"

"About that time, I think."

"How long did it take you to drive to Welford?"

"Rather less than an hour. We drove fast, Doctor Kinsley being anxious to get to his patient."

"Did you stay any time at the Grange?"

"Not more than ten minutes, I should say."

He answered each question simply, and in a straightforward, unhesitating manner, although it was evident that they surprised him somewhat.

The room was quiet, with a strange, breathless silence, as if this evidence were of more importance than any which had preceded it.

Maud sat, outwardly quite calm, but inwardly full of fear and anxiety. Lord Dereham had glanced at her once, then had looked away from her, his face scarcely less pale than her own. Mr. Home listened with a quiet, impassive countenance.

"At what time did you reach Ivyholme?"

"I did not notice."

"Have you no idea? Was it ten o'clock?"

"It may have been, it may have been later even. I did not drive fast and two different occasions I lost my way."

Lord Dereham started slightly, and Mr. Home glanced at him with a swift, significant glance.

"You are a stranger in this district, I believe, Mr. Graeme?"

"Yes."

"What then induced you to volunteer to drive Doctor Kinsley to Welford?"

"I wished to speak to him privately, and thought the opportunity a good one," Arnold answered calmly.

"Ah! And you thought you were sufficiently acquainted with the road to find your way back alone?"

"I thought so, but as the result proved I was mistaken."

"Did you have any conversation with Doctor Kinsley? I ought rather to ask if you spoke to him privately as you wished to do."

"I did not."

"How was that?"

"Doctor Kinsley was much distressed about the patient to whose assistance he had been called, and I did not thing the opportunity a favorable one."

He had not glanced in Maud's direction; he had scarcely spoken to her since they came into the room; but even those assembled there made a shrewd guess at the subject on which he wished to hold private conversation with Doctor Kinsley.

"Is there any truth in the assertion that it was past half-past ten when you reached Ivyholme?"

"It is quite likely that it was so late," Arnold answered calmly. "I did not heed the time; I was in deep thought, and, as I have already stated, lost my way twice, and covered a considerable quantity of ground unnecessarily."

"Did you mention to anyone that you had done so?"

"I really cannot tell you. I think I mentioned it to Doctor Kinsley's groom, but I am not sure."

"You went into the surgery on your return, and saw Doctor Blake? Why did you not mention the circumstances to him?"

"I did not think it of sufficient importance, I suppose."

"I am afraid you will find it of very great importance. After speaking to Doctor Blake, you went into the drawing-room?"

"Yes."

"Miss Maud Kinsley was there, I believe?"

A slight flush rose in Arnold Graeme's cheek, and an angry gleam darkened his gray eyes; it seemed horrible to him that Maud's name, which to him was so sacred, should be spoken here, before this mob of interested listeners.

"She was there."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

"You remained together for some time?"

"For a short time. Yes, we had some music."

"You were in evening dress, I believe; but the night was cold? You wore an overcoat, I presume?"

"Certainly. As you say, the night was cold, and I wore an overcoat."

"A grey one with a velvet collar?"

"Yes."

"Was it this one?"

Arnold leaned slightly forward and looked at the coat.

"That is my coat," he said quietly.

"It is one of rather uncommon fashion in this rural district, one not easily mistaken."

"Doubtless; it was made in Rome," Graeme answered quietly, and he lifted his eyes and glance across at Maud, giving her a smile of singular sweetness and brightness.

"Can you account for this mark on the sleeve?" asked the coroner gravely.

There was a moment's pause, so slight as only to be perceptible to so keen an observer as the London detective, and to Lord Dereham, whose senses seemed preternaturally quickened by his curiosity.

"I cannot," Arnold then said quietly.

"It is a blood stain!"

"That my be. I do not know how it came there."

There was a short silence. The coroner glanced at his notes.

Mr. Gifford, looking puzzled and anxious, bent over Maud and whispered a few reassuring words. The girl tried to answer them with a smile, but her lips were trembling.

Her brother sat, deathly pale, leaning his head on his hands—greatly affected by his friend's danger, the jurymen thought—but the warm friendship between the two men was well known in the little town, and this caused no surprise; besides, the earl himself, standing tall and stately by the mantelpiece, was hardly less moved.

"You know Ellen Baxter?"

The question was rather abruptly spoken, but it was answered quietly and unhesitatingly in the affirmative.

"You admired her greatly, I believe?"

"Everyone must do so," Arnold answered calmly. "She has a most uncommon beauty."

"You made a portrait of her?"

"I have made several sketches of her," Arnold answered with a slight smile. "Her face is a striking one, and most interesting to an artist."

"You were not her lover?"

"Certainly not!"

The words were spoken with a sudden haughtiness, and the speaker looked steadily at his interlocutor as he uttered them.

"You never paid your addresses to her?"

"Never."

"Nor went to meet her in the park or woods about Dereham?"

"Never."

"You were not in the park for the purpose on the evening on which the man Kirby met his death?"

"I was not. I have already told you, sir, where I went that night."

"You have accounted for part of your time, Mr. Graeme; but not for it all," the coroner remarked quietly. "It is difficult to believe that you were over two hours in finding your way from Welford, especially when we hear that the horse you drove bore signs of hard driving."

"Nevertheless it is true," said Graeme quietly, subduing his indignation by a strong effort.

"You were not in the park that night?"

"I was not within two or three miles of it, I should say."

"And yet, Mr. Graeme, it is an undoubted fact that this handkerchief, marked with your initials and stained with blood, was found within a few yards of the place where the body was found!"

There was a murmur, quickly repressed, among the assembly; Graeme alone sat perfectly calm. Lord Dereham made a quick movement towards Maud, then restrained himself; Gilbert turned cold and faint; Maud sat like a statue as white and as still.

Outside, the gathering dusk was deepening, the lamps in the street were being lighted rapidly one by one, in the opposite windows lights were beginning to glow cheerily behind the undrawn curtains, it was growing dark in the long crowded room, when someone struck a light and lighted the gas in the chandelier over the table and in the brackets round the walls.

The bright light flared upon the gaily-painted walls and eager faces, on the fire dying out in the grate, on Maud's soft velvet and furs, and on Arnold Graeme's grave, proud face, very pale and set and stern; and over the blood-stained handkerchief lying on the mahogany table.

When the momentary stir caused by the coroner's question died away, there was a short intense stillness, a stillness which had a strange and weird effect in a room full of people, a stillness as great as if the presence of Death were among them, silencing every voice there.

But even then it was remarked how calm Arnold Graeme sat, calm and unmoved, when, if the accusation were not directly brought against him, it was impossible not to know that he was suspected, with a suspicion which was thoroughly well-founded, of being guilty of the murder in Dereham Park.

It was a bitter moment to many there, for Doctor Kinsley had many friends at Berkeley, and his son's friend had been popular there; but for Gilbert Kinsley surely life could scarcely hold a more terrible one.

He saw his friend, the man whom he loved and who had loved him, with whom for years he had lived in intimate and affec-

tionate communion, accused of a crime of which he himself was guilty, and he sat silent, and spoke no word in his defence, uttered no assurance of his innocence.

He felt himself to be a craven and a coward, yet each moment as it passed confirmed him in his resolve to escape the consequences of his guilt at any cost.

He told himself that it was for his father's sake, for Gwen's, for Maud's; not for his own.

Arnold Graeme was innocent, and of course his innocence would be easily proved and the shame to him was so slight compared to the shame of Gilbert.

Arnold was alone in the world; he had no relatives to grieve over his shame, no family on which to bring degradation and disgrace; besides, he was willing to bear it; and Gilbert was coward enough to shelter himself behind another, aye, and, if need be, to let another suffer in his stead.

To Maud the moment was one of extreme suffering, suffering which seemed to chill the blood in her veins, and make her heart sink like lead.

She was hardly conscious of what was going on around her, there was a rushing sound as of many waters in her ears, her eyes were dim and almost sightless.

One thought only seemed present to her—that Gilbert must be saved at any cost, for Gwen's and her father's sake! And yet at such a cost as this!—at such a cost as this!

Arnold himself suffered less than any of those nearly interested in the result of the inquiry.

He was anxious, terribly anxious, for Maud, but he hardly thought of himself. The consciousness that he was bearing something for her sake, for the sake of the woman he loved so dearly, took away all the sting of his painful position, and there was a look of high resolve upon his face which the earl noticed at the time, and remembered afterwards, wondering why he had not understood it then.

For two or three minutes the heavy, oppressive silence remained unbroken. Arnold's eyes were resting on poor Maud's beautiful, pale face with anxious tenderness.

She was so white, and still, and motionless, that her face hardly looked like the face of a living woman at all, when suddenly, as if conscious of his fixed gaze, she lifted her eyes and looked at him, and in answer to his smile, she smiled also, a smile which was sadder than the cruellest passion of tears would have been.

Mr. Elwood's voice was very grave when he broke the silence.

"Is the handkerchief yours, Mr. Graeme?" he said. "It is marked with your initials."

"It is mine," Arnold said quietly.

"And you understand that it was found, as I have said, a few yards from the spot where the body of the deceased was found?"

"I understood you to say so, sir," Arnold Graeme said quietly.

"Can you account for its discovery there?"

"I cannot."

"Can you account for the stains of blood upon it?"

"I cannot."

Very quietly the words were spoken, very calmly, although the speaker knew full well what their real meaning meant to him.

"Do you persist in your denial that you were in Dereham Park on the night in question?"

"Certainly. I was not there."

"Would anybody have access to your handkerchief except yourself?"

Graeme smiled slightly.

"Certainly; I don't keep my linen under lock and key," he said calmly.

"And your coat?"

"My coat was hanging in the vestibule at Doctor Kinsley's."

"Anyone might have worn it?"

"If they wanted to, I daresay they might."

"Except that you were wearing it yourself that night?"

Graeme bowed slightly: the tone had not been a questioning one, it had seemed only to assert the fact.

"Have you no explanation to give, Mr. Graeme?"

"I have none."

"The circumstances are such that you are liable to a grave suspicion."

The artist shrugged his shoulders with a foreign gesture, which did not seem indifferent, only resigned.

"That is not my fault," he said quietly. "I have accounted, to the best of my ability for my time on the night of this unfortunate occurrence, and I can only assert my innocence in the most emphatic manner."

"I am afraid assertions will be of little avail against such proof!" said one of the jury impulsively.

Graeme turned to him with a slight bow.

"That will be my misfortune, then," he said gently and gravely, with a dignity which was not without its effect on those present. "I regret, but I cannot alter it."

Again a silence fell upon those assembled in the long, gaily-lighted room, but it was briefer and less intense now.

"You have nothing to say, Mr. Graeme?"

"Nothing."

The coroner bowed, and turning spoke to Miss Kinsley in a low tone; the girl's marble face changed suddenly, her eyes dilated in startled terror, then inclining her head slightly, she turned her face towards him, and the silence was broken by a quick, restless murmur, as those present prepared to listen to Maud Kinsley's answers to the numerous questions put to her.

"I am ready," she said quietly, in a low, perfectly calm voice, and the coroner, seeing how composed she was, could not guess how wildly her heart was beating under her rich soft furs, and how tightly her hands were clasped in her agony of fear and distress.

CHAPTER XIV.

THERE was a minute's pause before Mr. Elwood began his questioning, and he looked pained and grave as he turned to Maud.

He knew her well, personally, and was a favorite of his, while he had pretty young daughters of his own at home, and his affection for them made him sympathise strongly with this poor young creature, whose lover, for the report had reached him, was in so terrible a strait.

Personally, he believed Arnold to be guilty, and although he did not let this belief appear in his tone or manner, it increased his pity for the girl whose young life was so greatly shadowed by this man's sin.

"I have only one or two questions to ask you, Miss Kinsley," he began gently. "I think you know that no one would be more unwilling than myself to give pain to your father's daughter, but in this case duty is imperative."

"I quite understand that, Mr. Elwood," Maud said, in her low, clear voice. "I am quite ready to answer you."

"Thank you! On the night of the seventeenth Mr. Graeme drove Doctor Kinsley to Welford; do you remember what time it was when he returned?"

"I do not know when he returned," the girl answered quietly; "I was in the drawing-room, and it is not possible there to hear the carriages going round to the stables."

"What time was it when he joined you in the drawing room?"

"Between half-past ten and eleven."

"You were alone?"

"Yes; my brother had gone to his room immediately after dinner, as he was not very well; my sister had also retired."

"Did Mr. Graeme appear at all agitated when he joined you?"

"Not at all."

"Was there anything unusual in his manner—any appearance of haste?"

"I did not perceive any."

"Did he mention to you that he had lost his way on the return drive?"

Maud's sweet troubled eyes went rather wistfully to his face.

"I do not remember. He may have done so."

"Would you be likely to remember if he had done so?"

"I think so."

"You had some music, Mr. Graeme says. Did you play, or Mr. Graeme?"

"Mr. Graeme. He played and sang."

"Without any apparent effort or distress?"

"Certainly."

"There was a little pause.

Mr. Elwood went on in rather a constrained tone—

"At a later hour you went into the dining room?"

Maud started, looking at him with wide, dilated eyes.

"I am not mistaken, am I? You went into the dining-room to get some brandy for Miss Kinsley, who was faint; did you not?"

Maud's eyes went swiftly down the room and rested for a moment on Doctor Blake's face.

He looked uneasy and disturbed, and his eyes fell before hers. She withdrew her glance, and slowly turned it on Mr. Elwood's face again.

"Yes, I remember now," she said; "I had forgotten for a moment."

"Had Mr. Greame left the drawing-room when you went in quest of the brandy?"

"Yes, some time previously."

"Then the brandy was not for him?"

"Certainly not," Maud said with a touch of haughtiness; "if Mr. Graeme had wanted brandy, he would have gone for it himself."

"But Mr. Graeme might have been in such a distressed and agitated condition, that he was unable to do so," interposed one of the jurymen, seeing that Mr. Elwood was letting the assertion pass unchallenged.

Maud glanced at him in some surprise.

"I do not understand," she said quietly. "Nothing had occurred to distress or agitate Mr. Graeme; he was as composed as—as he is now."

She looked at Graeme as she spoke, with her brave yet troubled eyes; the young man met them with a smile which was somewhat weary and a trifle sad.

He saw more clearly than she did, poor, pretty Maud! that the London detective had left no stone unturned to prove his suspicions true, and that unless Gilbert suffered, he must do so.

"You swear that, Miss Kinsley?"

"Certainly," Maud answered haughtily, and there was a suppressed murmur of "Shame!" in the room, which made the jury-men who had spoken flush angrily and scowl.

"You have heard Mr. Graeme express admiration of Ellen Baxter, I presume, Miss Kinsley?" said the coroner.

"Yes, he admired her extremely."

"Did you think he was in love with her?"

"No."

"You never saw anything to induce you to suppose that he was in love with this young girl?"

"No."

There was a moment's pause, then in a voice like music, which, low and clear as it was, was distinctly audible to those about her, she added, holding her beautiful head erect, and looking in her velvet and furs like a young queen.

"This may be a strange time and place to make such an announcement, Mr. Elwood, but it seems just now a fitting one. I think you do not know that I am engaged to Mr. Graeme and that I have a perfect trust and faith in him."

She spoke quietly and simply, but with a certain imperial grace of bearing which impressed all those who heard her, and into Arnold Graeme's eyes, as they met hers, flashed a swift gleam of passionate joy and love, while the earl's strong hands clenched in sudden pain, and his white teeth were ground together for one moment.

Ah, shamed, in peril of his life as Arnold Graeme was, the Earl of Dereham envied him just then with a great envy, and would gladly have changed places with him now.

"Thank you, Miss Kinsley," Mr. Elwood said very gently, a tone of intense compassion softening his voice as he spoke. "That will do."

"Maud," her brother whispered eagerly, leaning towards her, in the buzz of talk which followed, "let someone take you away. There is no need for you to stay longer, it is no place for you."

Another witness was being examined now. Mr. Elwood was anxiously doing his best to elucidate the mystery.

He was determined to leave no stone unturned in his endeavor to clear Arnold Graeme, for the sake of the brown-eyed girl whom he had known since her childhood, but he felt hopeless as to the result, the evidence against him was so strong, the motive so apparent to them all.

"Maud, go dear!" Arnold said in a low tone, as the girl looked up at him with dim eyes and trembling lips. "It will soon be over now, and we will come to you, my darling," he added, his voice shaken and husky with intense emotion. "How can I thank you for those words? Go, my child."

She rose unsteadily, shivering under her furs.

She was dimly conscious that someone took her hand and put it through his arm, and led her away through the eager throng which parted to let them go through, out of the lighted room into another, which was strangely dark and cold: then came a few blessed moments of oblivion, from which she awoke to find Lord Dereham bending anxiously over her, and the chill wind from the open window blowing in upon her face.

As she opened her eyes and sat up giddily, the earl moved away from her side, and closed the window.

"You are better?" he said gently, but in a tone which was as cold as it was gentle.

Maud pushed her hair back from her forehead with her little trembling hands.

"Yes; did I faint? How stupid of me!" she said, trying to speak lightly, as she looked round her with dazed eyes; "I am sorry to have given you so much trouble."

"It was no trouble," he replied, still with the same gentle coldness. "The room was very warm. I have ordered some tea."

"What place is this?" the girl said huskily, looking round the unfamiliar room.

"We are at the 'George' still," he answered. "Would you have preferred to go home? My carriage is here; perhaps it will be best."

"No, no," she said, shrinking hurriedly from him. "I will stay here until——"

The words died away on her pallid lips, she stood up abruptly, drawing her furs about her, and moved rather unsteadily to the window. He followed her.

"Would you prefer the window open?" he asked.

"If you please," she said faintly, and when he had opened it, she stood leaning against the frame, her face turned to the wind which was blowing keenly in, stirring the golden hair upon her forehead, relieving the burning heat of her aching eyes, and calming the throbbing pain at her temple.

Lord Dereham watched her pitifully, his sorrow for her obliterating his own pain.

He loved her too well to be selfish where she was concerned, and his heart was aching for her with the keenest pain his life had known.

That Arnold was guilty he had little or no doubt now; he could not have with the evidence which had been brought forward before him, and that, since she loved him, Maud's anguish had only begun, he knew well.

If he could have spared her at any cost to himself he would have done so without a moment's hesitation, but he could do nothing but suffer with her in silence.

Presently a maidservant brought in tea, placed it on the table, and with a curious glance at the tall, grave man standing before the empty grate, and another at the slender, fur-clad figure by the window, went out again, closing the door after her.

The movement of the door aroused Maud who started, turned her fair head, and glanced quickly around her.

"What was it?" she asked hurriedly, coming forward with startled eyes.

"Only the tea," he replied, trying to speak carelessly. "Won't you have some? It is about afternoon tea time, is it not?" he added smiling.

"Is it over?" she asked nervously.

"No, not yet; it is only ten minutes since we left the room."

"Ten minutes!" she said restlessly, throwing open her fur coat. "It seems like ten hours."

Lord Dereham smiled sadly as he glanced at her, and the reproachful look in his eyes was deep enough even to pierce Maud's misery.

"Forgive me!" she said hurriedly. "You would, if you knew how wretched I am, how unspeakably wretched!"

"I can guess, dear," he said gently. "Come, Maudie; try to think of me as your brother, now—forget that I ever wished to be anything else to you, and let me take care of you. Think how it will add to—to Graeme's anxiety if you should be ill now."

"I shall not be ill—it was only for a moment. Thank you."

He has put her gently into a chair, and brought her some tea.

The girl took it in her trembling hand; but although her throat was parched and dry, she could not swallow. She put it gently aside, and rose and went back to the window again.

Lord Dereham stood by the table, silent in his jealous pain.

How she loved him—this man who was so little worthy of her love, that even when betrothed to her, when he had, as she herself had said, all her trust and faith, he could so far prove himself unworthy of them as to betray her for a low-born girl. How would she bear it if he were convicted? It would kill her—it would kill her!"

Presently she turned from the window and looked over at him with restless, shining eyes.

"Do you think it is over?" she said huskily.

"Shall I go? Do you mind being left alone?" he asked gently.

"No, no; only come to me when it is over. The time seems so long—I am so impatient; but you will forgive me, because I am so unhappy. You will not be angry with me?"

"Angry with you!" he echoed. "Maud, don't you know that I would give my life to spare you this?"

"Ah," she answered, with a faint smile; "I did not ask for your life, but for a much lesser gift, and you refused it me!"

"I refused it you, Maud?"

"Yes! Do you think if they had been left to themselves they would have found out?—Ah, go," she added, almost wildly; "if you stay I may say what I shall be sorry for. Your London detective has done his work well! I congratulate you on having so clever a spy!"

She turned from him passionately, and ran wildly back to the window; it was a wide, low window, and the girl sank down upon it, shivering and trembling like a leaf, covering her face with her hands.

Without a word Lord Dereham turned and left her alone in the glimmering dusk of the dimly-lighted room.

At the sound of the closing door Maud started and looked up, uttering a little cry as she stretched out her hands with a supplicating gesture.

Only silence answered her appeal, and as she sank back again against the window frame, her calmness gave way, and her aching eyes knew the merciful relief of tears.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A LAPP WEDDING.—Away up in the cold far north of Europe is Lapland. A correspondent gives an account of one of their weddings. Down the room was a long table, covered with coarse cloth, perhaps, if for grand folks, but much more likely in its native bareness.

Upon the arrival of the wedding party the feast began. Boiled meat was brought in a large dish, or just as likely piled up on the table till it was full. On the top of this came dirty bowls full of grease. Round this savory and appetizing repast gathered the hungry Lapps, ravenous as wolves, and fell upon it with appetites that would astonish any western dweller in a cultered land.

They came to eat, and they did eat! Lumps of meat were seized by nature's forks—fingers as black as coals, innocent of water for unknown periods, clad in ancient grime—plunged into the grease, and then, to the luscious mouths of the assembled. After this came the dessert—reindeer cheese cut into pieces, dipped into the grease, and eaten with a horn spoon or fingers. Huge draughts of corn brandy washed all down. Right diligently was the bottle plied, with ever and anon a quaff from the grease bowls to keep the brandy from taking too much effect, the grease leaving its traces on the drinkers' faces, till at last they shone in their fatty coating.

Now began the real wedding joy—guests sing and shouting with all the vigor of powerful and healthy lungs. Songs were improvised, generally senseless, because the improviser was so. Soon some of the guests fell asleep on the table, and were shoveled on to the seats—or under them—against the walls by such of their comrades as were able to take part in the next proceedings, i. e., dancing, if such it could be called. A fresh rose a tempest of shouting and jumping—a wild scene, we are told, our ears cannot conceive. Fiddlers scraped and scraped, and were encouraged to scrape yet louder, while some Lapp, more musical than the others, beat time with a pitlock on the kettle bottom. Soon the floor was dotted with the forms of those who were too drunk to jump any more, and there they lay snoring, while their comrades hopped and reeled over them till they, too, fell and the sleep. The general ending was that the whole party slept together on the floor.

ALL ignorance and all ill-doing redound to the injury of the entire community.

LOVE'S SEASONS.

BY W. P. W.

Love came to my heart with the earliest swallow,
The lark's blithe matins and breath of spring;
With hyacinth-bell and with budding sallow,
And all the promise the year could bring.

Love dwelt in my heart while the Summer roses
Poured forth their incense on every hand;
And from wood and meadow and garden-closes
The sweet bird-voices made glad the land.

Love grew in my heart to its full fruition
When Autumn lavished her gifts untold,
And answered earth's myriad-voiced petition
With orchard-treasure and harvest-gold.

Love waned in my heart when the snows were shaken
From Winter's hand o'er the rose's bed,
And never again shall my soul awaken
At Hope's glad summons—for Love lies dead.

FORTUNE'S HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DARKNESS within and without, darkness all about her, darkness in her heart!

Yolande Glynne, a desolate forlorn bride, not three weeks married and already neglected by her husband, begins to realize her position, to pity herself, and to weep bitter tears about herself in girlish heart-broken grief and anger.

But, when the long, long day wears on, and the sunshine fades, and the blue skies are darkly clouded in one of April's changeful moods, and the afternoon wanes quickly, lowering skies and soughing wind and chill blasts of rain betokening a wet and stormy evening, the poor little married girl's mood changes pitifully.

"The whole livelong day without one sight of his face!"

This is what she is saying to herself now, as she sits in the gloaming in her chill gloomy bed-room.

Few of the rooms at Pentreath are cosy or warm, for they are nearly all large, while several are positively grand from their stately proportions and time-faded splendid furniture.

Yolande's bed-room is simply appalling to her nervous imagination.

There is a fire in the huge fire place certainly, with a massive black marble mantelpiece frowning over it.

The decorous dull-red fire, which it guarded by such an array of shining steel and bronze implements, and radiating ash-pans, and a massive flashing burnished fender that Yolande is afraid to take the liberty of poking it, does not impart the least glow of warmth or brightness to the area of faded purple Brussels carpet beyond it, much less to the seat in the far-off window where little Mrs. Glynne, wrapped in a shawl, is gazing out fruitlessly and wearily a miserable little Mariana,

"Athwart the glooming flats"

of the sodden park-lands, with Mariana's moan on her pale lips.

"He is not coming—not coming! Not one sign of him—for I have never taken my eyes off that bend of the carriage-road beyond the trees. No sign of him yet, and it is nearly six o'clock! I have not seen him since ten this morning. He has been gone more than seven hours—all the day—he and Joyce Murray together. Oh, Dallas, Dallas, you need not insult me so cruelly, shamefully—you need not let every one see I am a poor, unloved, despised creature you married for her money! Oh, Dallas, my darling, you need not degrade yourself so!"

She is too miserable, too anxious, too forlorn even to feel anger against him, as she sits there, with her pale cheek pressed against the cold window-pane and her aching eyes fixed on the distant curve of the carriage-road, yearning for a sight of that beloved familiar figure—in vain!

She has been sitting there without stirring or changing her position for hours, ever since the afternoon began to wane, and she has expected the returning party from their long mountain-excursion every minute.

She has left the drawing-room, where indeed she was sitting in solitary grandeur, as Mrs. Murray, with cold courtesy, begged her to excuse her from keeping her company.

"I must be in my own rooms, ready at any moment the Earl's nurse wishes to speak to me," she says vaguely, the truth being that she is keeping a close and jealous watch on mademoiselle's movements, lest she supplant her as supernumerary head-nurse in the dying Earl's room.

Mademoiselle has been sent several times with messages to the nurse or to the Viscount, when in his father's apartments, by Lady Maria, or on behalf of Lady Maria herself, and mademoiselle stays there sometimes, and takes the nurse's place for half an hour, and sees the doctor sometimes, and knows everything, and understands everything, and is generally invaluable.

But Mrs. Murray feels she could cheerfully strangle mademoiselle.

The rights of relationship, the privileges of birth and of old acquaintanceship all seem to melt away as barriers before the detestable, cunning, ubiquitous person who has not been in the house three weeks.

Lady Maria says, with ungrateful candor that she never met any one who understood her so well as Mademoiselle Gantier.

The Viscount, in his grave sententious manner, declares that mademoiselle is "a most estimable young lady," and that her services are "peculiarly valuable to Lady Maria."

So Yolande, being left quite alone, and dreading Lady Maria's arrival in the drawing-room, has gone to her own grand, cheerless room, and has there shut herself in from every one.

Her maid has brought her some tea at five o'clock, which she drinks sitting in the window-recess still, pretending to read the while, lest Pitts should discover she is watching for her husband.

Pitts however, sharp-eyed, quick-eared waiting-woman that she is, is well acquainted with all the secrets of her young mistress's married life.

She brings her mistress the latest news of the household, with her strong cup of tea.

"His lordship the Earl is sinking, they say, ma'am," Pitts tells her, with bated breath. "And Sir Gregory Parker is expected about nine to-night. They are saying, ma'am, that his lordship the Earl"—Pitts loves titles—"will hardly live through another twenty-four hours."

"Has Captain Glynne come back yet, do you know, Pitts?" Yolande asks, with an assumption of much carelessness, her eyes fixed on a page of her novel as she sips her tea.

"No, ma'am, they haven't come back yet," Pitts answers, with a touch of resentfulness in her voice.

And then Pitts goes away gladly to the gossip downstairs, her mistress telling her she will ring for her when she wants her.

Already they are discussing young Mrs. Glynne downstairs as "a very quiet young lady" and handsome Captain Glynne as too bad in his neglect of his poor little bride's society.

"They haven't come back yet!" Yolande repeats, tossing aside the unread book the pages of which are wet with fast-falling tears. "They are together, and I am left alone! Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do? How shall I live this dreadful life?"

She sobs piteously, and then checks herself, lest "they" see the signs of weeping disfiguring her face and, despise her.

No! "They" shall not despise her—cruel, false Dallas, her faithless unloving husband who knows, alas, that his sad little wife loves him passionately, and cruel, false, fair Joyce, who wants to rob her of even the poor semblance of her husband's affection!

So she resolutely wipes away her tears, and gazes and watches and waits until the blood is chilled in her veins and her heart is desperately sick with "deferred hope."

But, when the day is dying and the heavy rain-clouds are deepening the twilight all about the darkling woodlands, Yolande turns away with a long heavy sigh of despair from her post at the window, and, lighting the candles on her toilet-table, wearily begins to dress for dinner.

She will not ring for Pitts; she looks so ill and spiritless that Pitts may think she is unhappy, and it will keep her from thinking of her troubles if she has to dress herself.

So she puts on a black lace dress—one of those soft, floating, diaphanous, ever-becoming dresses which look well even in the shabby stage—over an amber-satin petticoat with knots of rich amber satin amongst the black lace draperies; and then she puts on her diamonds.

Yolande has several good diamond ornaments in her splendid new velvet-lined jewel-case now.

In the broad band of velvet around her white throat she fastens three small stars of brilliants.

She puts in her diamond ear-studs and dons her gold bangles, a horse-shoe of diamonds on the one and one large splendid stone flashing like a miniature sun on the other.

Then Yolande Glynne looks at herself long and earnestly—at the ghostly picture-like grace and charm of the slender stately reflection she sees in the mirror.

The effect of the black-and-amber dress and the diamonds, and of the fair white face and shining dark hair and brows above the deep lustrous eyes, startles even herself.

And, as she gazes earnestly, without one touch of selfish vanity, a sudden wild fond hope lights and flushes the marble-pale face into beauty.

Would that she could see Dallas new, meet one admiring look from his eyes such as he gave her last night, hurry to his side, clasp her arms about his neck, and kiss him quickly, lest her courage should fail!

Surely he has returned by this time, for she heard footsteps in the dressing-room a few minutes since.

And, with her hands pressed tightly over her heart, to still its loud throbbing, Yolande hurries softly to the door communicating with her husband's room, and listens breathlessly.

The door is locked, but the key is on her side.

And, nerving herself to the daring act she unlocks the door stealthily, and cautiously peeps in.

There is no one there; and, trembling and laughing at herself, Yolande ventures in step by step, and gazes about her with strange interest.

It is the first time she has ever dared to enter her husband's apartment, and she is terrified now at the thought of his entering and finding her there.

Still, like poor Fatima, she lingers on and on in the Bluebeard chamber, peering about in most inquisitive fashion.

Captain Glynne's man—an excellent servant of his class—has just left everything laid ready for his master to dress—evening-clothes and stiff snowy shirt laid on the bed, silk socks and patent leather shoes airing near the nice bright fire, white tie, razors, and brushes on the dressing-table, and a can of hot water steaming in the foot-bath.

Yolande fingers the ivory brushes, touches the razors with a tremor of fear, resisting a violent longing to open one of the shining blades, peeps into the dressing-case, and laughs when she sees cosmetique and violet-powder and macassar oil, and "brilliantine" and choice perfumes, and pastes and unguents.

"Oh, you vain fellow, and you so handsome already!" she says, smiling delightedly at her discovery. "I should so like to see Dallas waxing and twisting up his moustache, and powdering and perfuming himself like a professional beauty. Oh, you bad boy!"

And then Fatima's mishap befalls this too-curious bride also, a bottle of macassar-oil replacing the fatal door-key.

She has the bottle in her hand with the stopper out, sniffing at it daintily and smiling at her own thoughts, when she catches the sound of quickly approaching footsteps.

The bottle, heedlessly restored, without its stopper, to its place upon the table, treacherously tumbles over, and from it pours a scented rose-colored stream over the razor-case, the satchel of silk handkerchiefs and a couple of white ties.

Yolande has barely time to realize the ruin she has wrought ere she escapes into her own room, panting and laughing, yet dreadfully frightened.

She locks the door, and stands listening when she hears a loud exclamation of dismay; it is not however in Dallas's voice, but in his servant's.

"Just time for me to make my escape!" she thinks, too flurried quite to realize that she is leaving an innocent person to suffer blame.

"I had better go downstairs at once," Yolande decides reluctantly, "and be out of the way of awkward inquiries."

She has a childish dread of provoking her husband's anger, and fairly trembles with fear as to what he may say to her in his displeasure at her entering his room and meddling with his toilet-table.

But there is no sound of Captain Glynne's dear imperious tones in the dressing-room.

And, as Yolande passes slowly along the corridor on her way downstairs, she sees that Joyce Murray's room is unoccupied save by her maid, who is quietly sewing in white net quilling into an evening-dress.

They have not yet returned, Yolande is convinced.

It is twenty minutes to seven now, quite dusk, and rain is falling.

The wind has risen also, and is howling through the yet leafless trees, and wailing and moaning around the gables and chimney-pots of Pentreath Place, which stands on high ground.

Oh, what if something has happened? What if Dallas should—should never return?

The house is silent—silent as the grave save for the moaning wind and some low-toned voices in the Earl's sitting-room, where nurses and watchers are waiting for Death.

What if an accident has happened to Dallas—she never remembers Joyce Murray now—and if the shadows of funereal gloom which seem closing about her are but an omen of some awful calamity which is about to befall her?

What if Dallas be dead—if she will never more see a smile in those gray-blue eyes, never more hear the tones of the proud calm voice which has such magic power to stir the pulses of her heart?

Oh, to see Dallas now and clasp his hand, and look upon him in his handsome, stalwart manhood, and forgive him anything, everything because he is as "the light of the eyes" to her!

Only two of the lamps are lighted in the great entrance-hall, which is church like in its size and proportions, with its dark lofty roof and its escutcheons and stained-glass windows.

It is silent and shadowy as the rest of the house, as Yolande comes slowly and softly down the stairs and crosses it with a ghostly rustle of her silken skirts on the bare polished floor.

There is a crimson-dyed sheepskin before the drawing-room door, and Yolande, standing on it, pauses a moment while she softly turns the handle, dreading in truth to encounter either Mrs. Murray or Lady Maria just now.

There is only the glow of the bright fire-light in the room, and the radiance of one crimson-shaped lamp.

The window-blinds have not yet been drawn, and in the gray, wild evening, from amid the tossing trees and driving rain, beneath the stormy clouds of coming night, a wayfarer might well look with desolate envious eyes at the warmth and pleasantness within, at the picturesque group in the fire-light on the big Persian rug.

A very pretty girl is lying back wearily and restfully in a satin-cushioned rocking-chair, drinking tea, and smiling down languidly at the outstretched figure of a handsome young man lying on the rug at her feet—Captain Dallas Glynne, in his old favorite position, and pretty Miss Joyce Murray, with tumbled golden hair and bright flushed cheeks and soft shadowed eyes, from the healthful fatigue of their six-hours'-long mountain excursion together.

"We're in a disgraceful state of mud and damp, Dallas, both of us," Joyce is saying, as she lazily bends down for his cup, which he as lazily hads up to her, and then takes up the little silver tea-pot of the tete-a-tete service on the table beside her. "It was delicious; but I'm awfully tired; aren't you? I wish dinner was an hour off ——"

And then they become simultaneously aware of Yolande's presence.

CHAPTER XIX.

SHE pauses but for a few seconds, in sheer surprise and bewilderment; but it is long enough.

Neither Dallas Glynne nor Joyce Murray will ever forget the incident or forget her as she looked just then, graceful, elegant, disdainful, making them both for a few moments feel a little afraid of her, a little ashamed of themselves.

Joyce is the first to recover herself, with a gay laugh.

"Oh, Mrs. Glynne!" she exclaims. "What a reproach to us! You are dressed already for dinner, and Captain Glynne and I are not fit to be seen! I was just saying how disgracefully wet and muddy we were."

"You both seem rather oblivious of the flight of time certainly," Yolande retorts very coolly. "It is a quarter to seven now."

She experiences no feeling of anger, or excitement, or indeed emotion of any kind beyond a strange, stupefied feeling of dull contempt and despair—contempt for herself as well as for them, despair for her own future.

"Your mountain walk was rather a long one, wasn't it?" she says, with a faint icy smile, looking from one to the other composedly. "I was rather anxious as to what had become of you both; but I need not have been, I see. You took care of each other. And your mother kindly assured me this morning that she had placed my husband under your guardianship for the day, Miss Murray."

All this is said easily, smilingly, with a cold woman-of-the-world indifference which is too careless for scorn, and which stings Dallas Glynne worse then tears or upbraiding would have done.

"She despises me," he tells himself, "and I deserve it. It is very bad form of me to go off for the whole day with Joyce and leave her at home! By Jove, Yolande looks this evening as if she could pay me back in my own coin! What a strange girl she is! I'm not by any means sure I quite understand her."

And Joyce says inwardly—

"How very stupid of mamma to say anything of the kind! She knows that Dallas Glynne's wife must hate me and be awfully jealous of me!"

Then she picks up her sealskin cape and black serge toque.

"I really must disappear now, Dallas," she says, laughing, "and I should advise you to do the same. We shall be in deeper disgrace than we are in now if we don't hurry."

"Captain Glynne," Yolande says distinctly, with a stress on the formal appellation, "I want to tell you, lest you blame your man, that it was I who was the cause of the accident in your room just now."

He pauses, amazed, on his way to the door, and Joyce pauses a moment also, forgetting herself.

"What accident?" he asks, turning back.

"I went into your room to speak to you, thinking you were there," Yolande answers steadily, in cold even tones, "and, having foolishly stopped to look at your dressing-case and a bottle of macassar-oil, I—spilled it over some things—spoiled them, I fear. I am very sorry!"

But there is utter indifference in her tone and he is nettled.

"What did you spoil?" he asks very sharply.

"I don't know," Yolande replies, without looking at him. "Some ties and handkerchiefs and other things."

She sinks down gracefully into a low easy-chair, and puts up her pretty black-satin amber-slashed shoes on the fender-bar of the tiled hearth.

"Did you do it on purpose?" he asks more sharply.

He thinks this will effectually rouse her from the cold provoking insouciance that is as new as it is unpleasant to him.

But Yolande only smiles disdainfully as she glances at him.

"No. Why should I do such a foolish thing?" she replies carelessly.

And Captain Glynne dashes up to dress, muttering savagely.

* * * * * * *

Lady Maria, greatly to Mrs. Murray's displeasure, will not permit dinner to be delayed one minute.

So, when Captain Glynne and Miss Murray at length make their appearance, the fish has followed the soup, and Lady Maria, looking like a martyr in a horribly-unbecoming gown of stone-colored velvet, glances up sternly from her plate of boiled chicken.

"A thousand pardons!" Joyce says airily, smiling at her. "Dinner is half over, I am afraid."

"Dinner was begun a quarter of an hour ago, Joyce," Lady Maria responds austerely. "And, even if I could not consent to

keep the rest of the family waiting for dinner, I could not calmly consent to ruin my own health for days simply because you and Captain Glynne chooses to take such long walks together!"

Captain Glynne reddens angrily, and glances covertly at his wife from beneath his half-lowered eyelids. But Yolande is not looking at him.

She is talking to Viscount Glynne about the last St. Bernard dog-show, and, though she hears her husband speak, she looks across the table at him without any special interest, and goes on toying with the bangles on her slender pink-white arms and adjusting the half-hoop of cat's-eyes and diamonds — her engagement-ring—above the thick circlet of plain gold on her finger.

"We lost our way, Lady Maria," Captain Glynne says curtly. "I explained how it happened to Glynne. We got down into Llanfair Valley instead of keeping across the mountain—Moelwyn, I think it's called ——"

But Joyce interrupts him, with a gay laugh—

"You never will learn Welsh topography I'm afraid, Dallas. That long low mountain beyond Llanfair is Moel Galch. Moelwyn is miles off. We really got dreadfully far out of the right road," she adds, smiling merrily. "I'm so awfully sorry!"

"Are you? You don't seem so," retorts Lady Maria disagreeably.

She dislikes eating at the family dinner-table, being obliged to dispense with some of the weighing and measuring of her food that goes on in her own apartments, and always tempers the delight afforded by her presence by being very cross.

Yolande looks up at this moment, and Joyce meets her gaze. It is amused and coldly contemptuous.

"Well," Joyce says, deliberately eating her fish and looking from Lady Maria to Yolande, "I cannot truly say I regret the walk, long as it was. It was simply delightful!"

"It must have been," Yolande agrees, in clear cold tones, and smiling as brightly and coldly as Joyce herself. "I suppose you would like just such another walk to-morrow, Miss Murray?"

"I should," Miss Murray answers, and she loses her temper so far as to say it rather defiantly.

The Viscount looks at her with a sickly smile, and elongates his thin compressed lips.

Mrs. Murray clinks her spoon against a wine-glass nervously, and Dallas Glynne feels a spasm of rage against everybody at the table.

"Joyce needn't think I am going to make an ass of myself even for her," he says inwardly. "I've seen too much of that sort of thing. It would do Joyce no good to have her name coupled with mine now; and I certainly shall not give Yolande cause to pose as the neglected, injured wife. Not that the cross stiff little creature seems to care very much now what I do! Ever since that blessed wedding-day she has been more like a sugar-icicle than anything else!"

He goes across at the "sugar-icicle"—Yolande is sitting at the opposite side of the oval table between Mrs. Murray and Lady Maria—and wonders gloomily whether, on the whole, it really would not have been pleasanter to have his fair young wife passionately and happily fond of him, as he had been so greatly afraid would be the normal state of affairs in his conjugal existance.

She seems to have quite "fallen out of love" with him now.

Captain Glynne does not feel as satisfied as he thought he should be in the circumstances.

"I wonder if I could not make her as much in love with me as ever, if I were to try?" he thinks.

At this moment Yolande looks up again, her eyes and his meet, a faint troubled flush disturbs the cold pallor of her face, and he sees with what an effort she tries to continue her conversation with Viscount Glynne.

She has been enthusiastically describing the beauties and charms of a St. Bernard puppy she had seen at the show.

"You're regularly in love with him, Mrs. Glynne!" the Viscount remarks, with his slow, mirthless, sneering laugh. "Young ladies are apt to fall in love with handsome puppies."

Though she strives her utmost, Yolande cannot help reddening hotly, for the sting in the rude speech is palpable enough to every one.

"Well, I am in love with that dear little St. Bernard," she admits, looking down at her plate, and flushing more and more deeply in her anger and embarrassment, though she tries bravely not even to feel the insulting innuendo. "I never saw such a beautiful little dog! I only wish I could buy him."

"If he is a well-bred puppy, you shall certainly have him, Yolande," her husband says, with a slight smile, and a faint accent on the adjective.

"Oh, thank you!" Yolande responds, laughing, a little fluttered and confused by Dallas's addressing her in such gentle tones and with such a soft wistful look in his eyes. "But I wasn't angling for a present, I assure you. Perhaps, after I had got the little dog, I shouldn't care so much for him."

"I am sure you wouldn't!" declares Lord Glynne, breaking a crust of bread with a vicious snap, an ugly, saturnine grin on his lean dark face. "You'd find him a bad bargain."

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Sir Gregory Parker, the eminent London physician, has arrived, and the Viscount has left the drawing-room, and has gone to the Earl's chamber.

In the sitting-room adjoining the old man's bedroom, the three doctors and Lord Glynne hold a social, semi-professional, and not unpleasant seance, mademoiselle occasionally finding a pretext for joining them.

Sir Gregory Parker has dined well; but he does not refuse a glass of the choice old Burgundy which Viscount Glynne offers him, nor indeed do the other doctors.

They are all three very courteous and deferential to the man who will so soon be an Earl, and the Viscount, finds the evening much more enjoyable than one spent in the drawing-room.

There every one is either silent or sulky except Lady Maria, who for one weary hour after dinner exerts herself, as she says, and diverts the conversation with lugubrious cheerfulness to sick-room topics, anecdotes of illness and sudden deaths, strange remedies and extraordinary recoveries, until her hearers are all limp and pallid with depression.

Joyce Murray yawns openly several times and at last begs to be excused from sitting up any longer.

Her mother, the Honorable Mrs. Murray escapes from the consciousness of her troubles in a brief doze, until at last Lady Maria herself says "Good night," and the occupants of the drawing-room immediately scatter.

The Honorable Mrs. Murray, with her stateliest air, rustles up to the door of the Earl's sitting-room, and prepares to enter and assert her superiority over mademoiselle, if "the presuming creature" is there at this moment.

Finding she is there, and countenanced by the presence of the Viscount and the three doctors, Mrs. Murray is obliged to retire very meekly, after a few brief questions.

Then she goes into her daughter's room to vent some of her displeasure and discuss some of her grievances.

But Joyce is already in bed, and, hearing her mother's footstep, and anticipating the usual maternal grumbling, pretends to be asleep.

But, as the good lady feels she must find fault with something or somebody to relieve her ruffled sensibility, she finds fault with Joyce's dressing-case, and reproves her daughter crossly for leaving her jewels and money loosely thrown into an unlocked box.

"You are always losing your money, or trinkets, or something!" she says complainingly. "Now here are your gold bracelets thrust into your necklet-case, here is a ring-case, the very one you had with poor dear Lord Dunavon's ring, empty! I hope you have the ring safe, Joyce. Do you hear me my dear? That ring is worth quite seventy or eighty pounds. Do you know where it is, Joyce—your beautiful diamond-and-sapphire ring, my dear?" Mrs. Murray asks anxiously.

"Yes, mamma, I know where it is," Joyce answers, sharply and suddenly, in a very wide-awake voice. "Please don't worry about it," she adds crossly, turning her face away from the light of the candle Mrs. Murray carries. "The ring is quite safe."

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Captain Dallas Glynne, sitting smoking in an easy-chair by the fire in his own room is asking himself over and over again why that cur, his cousin, was so rude to him at the dinner-table.

"I wonder why Lyulph Glynne was so spiteful to me to-night," he muses. "Because the fellow will be Earl of Pentreath so soon, or because—of—Joyce Murray?"

There is a long silence.

Captain Glynne's cigar goes out, and he throws it aside, and, leaning forward, with his elbows on his knees and his hands over his head, thinks and thinks, staring at the fire, until the fire goes out too.

And he is thinking of a young, faithful wife whom in heart and soul he has wronged, of a pure, fond, true love, given to him freely, which he has cast aside as a worthless thing, of the mirage of a false fair woman's shallow selfish fancy, which has lured him almost beyond the border-line of honor and plighted troth.

He will never forget Yolande's face this evening, the proud anguish of the large dark eyes, the incredulous pain of the fair girlish face changing into such disdain of him and his falseness and his insulting neglect.

"My poor little wife! My poor pretty little dark-haired girl!" he mutters, his heart throbbing fast in a sudden passion of fickle admiration. "I wish that Joyce and I had never met again. I wish I had not been fool enough to go off with her to-day and leave Yolande. She will never forget it or forgive it: and I wish," he mutters, lower still, "I had never given her my ring and taken this."

He has taken a tiny object out of his waistcoat pocket, and it lies in the palm of his hand—a circlet of light glittering with points of fire—Joyce Murray's sapphire-and-diamond betrothal-ring from her dead lover.

"I'll give it back again to Joyce," he says hurriedly, dropping it into his pocket again. "I hate the sight of the thing. She was false to me for the sake of this ring and a few gew-gaws like it. I hate it, and I hate her falseness and sometimes I hate her! Besides, what if Yolande ever saw it or knew I had it? Poor little romantic soul! She doesn't imagine that there could be a woman who would barter the man she loved for 'gear an' gowd.' Poor little Yolande! I wish she didn't dread me and shun me as she does," he says, with a frown and a deep quick sigh. "I wish I could see her now. I would try to atone for this day if I could!"

When, a minute later, a gentle tap comes on the door between his room and Yolande's it startles him like a mystical answer to his desire.

He starts up very eagerly—he is ashamed to feel how eagerly—and hurries to the door.

"Yes, yes," he says, in quick unsteady tones. "Is that you, Yolande?"

"Yes," she replies, in a weary quiet voice, opening the door; and the pale young face, the wistful bright eyes, the slender silk-robed form appear in the dark portal; for the two candles on the toilet-table utterly fail to light the huge cheerless room behind her. "I wanted to speak to you. I have been writing letters, and I wanted to speak to you for a minute, to consult you—please."

Dallas takes the cold little hand that is holding the door, and clasps it in both his.

"You want to speak to me, Yolande?" he asks huskily, trembling beneath the sudden passion of keen emotion that surges over him. "And I want to speak to you, my own little wife, my darling!"

"Captain Glynne," the unhappy young wife exclaims, trying to draw her quivering hand from his strong clasp, "it is needless, and it is cruel, I think, to use such pretences. I know quite well that I am not your 'darling'!"

CHAPTER XX.

DALLAS and Yolande—"man and wife together" by the laws of Church and State, but disunited and almost strangers in sad reality, stand now with clasped hands, gazing at each other in wistful silence, until the young wife's dark mournful eyes are dim with unshed tears.

"What do you mean by saying that you are not my darling?" Dallas demands angrily, but in husky unsteady tones. "No, I won't let you go until you tell me!"

Compared with his muscular strength, hers is slight indeed; besides, the resistance she offers is not very strenuous.

So, with both her ice-cold hands imprisoned in one of his, Captain Glynne draws his forlorn girl-wife close to his breast and presses his face to hers.

"Oh, don't, don't! Let me go!" Yolande cries, sobbing miserably, but yielding in spite of herself, of her pride and anger, her jealousy and wretchedness. "You are cruel, cruel! Let me go, Captain Glynne!"

"What is the matter with you, my poor little woman?" he whispers, kissing her. "Don't cry so, Yolande darling; you are bedewing me with your tears!"

He wipes the tear-stained face compassionately, and wonder rather vexedly how women can shed such floods of tears as they do.

"I beg your pardon," she says, in a resentful tone, and trying to thrust his hands away. "If you let me go, as I asked you, you would not be annoyed with my stupid tears!"

"I am not annoyed, I am grieved," Captain Glynne responds, not quite truthfully. "Let us shut this door, and come into my room. This big gloomy mausoleum of yours is enough to give you your death of cold! No wonder you are half frozen!"

He shuts the door, places her in an easy-chair, and, drawing the red embers of the fire carefully together, puts on them some paper, a handful of wax matches, and a little coal.

"See what a capital housemaid I am!" he says, laughing.

As Yolande watches him on his knees on the hearthrug, with the flickering fire-light shining on his close-cropped red-gold hair, on his low broad brow and thick curling hazel lashes, she wonders if there was ever anybody so handsome and winning and lovable!

"There, dear," he goes on, looking up with a gay smile, as he breaks up a cigar-box to feed the blaze.

Then, dusting his fingers in his silk handkerchief, and kneeling at her feet, he lays his fair handsome head gently upon her arm.

"Give me a smile and a kiss, Yolande, for a reward," he says coaxingly.

"You don't care for my smiles or my kisses either," Yolande answers coldly, with a heaving breast, her heart aching with anguish.

His brow darkens sullenly at this, and he rises to his feet.

"Why can't you let by-gones be by-gones?" he cries resentfully.

"I did not think they were by-gones," Yolande answers, rising also. "I have had no reason to think so, you must admit."

"You allude to my having gone out with Miss Murray to-day, I suppose?" Dallas says, coloring, and twisting his moustache angrily. "I asked you, but you refused to come with me."

"Yes," Yolande admits curtly. "I knew I wasn't wanted."

"You are insulting me, Yolande!" he mutters, through his clenched teeth; and his eyes blaze with fierce anger.

"I am not," Yolande retorts, turning away with a haggard look of weariness. "I am only stating a simple fact, that you had chosen the company you preferred, and did not want mine."

"You are insulting me!" Dallas cries again, angrily reproachful, "You are accusing me, your lawful husband, of infidelity of heart and purpose towards you!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

BLACK DYE FOR IRON.—To get a black dye or stain for cast-iron that can be varnished, dip in a solution made by boiling gall-nuts in water in a glass or earthern jar.

INCOMBUSTIBLE.—Wood may be rendered incombustible, it is said, by washing it with skimmed milk mixed with brine. It is recommended for roofs and out-buildings.

DISEASE.—Photography is suggested as a means of disclosing symptoms of disease before they are otherwise perceptible. In eruptive disorders its use is particularly practicable.

WATERPROOF PAPER.—A new water and grease proof paper is obtained by saturating paper with a liquid prepared by dissolving shellac at a moderate heat in a saturated solution of borax.

PROTECTING SAFES.—A new plan for protecting safes is to enclose them in a wire netting, so connected with a battery and bell that the division of any portion of the wire ruptures a circuit, and the bell gives the alarm.

SAND PAPER.—"Sand-paper" is now made without either sand or paper. Glass is pulverized and is sifted on muslin, which has been covered with a coating of glue. It is better and more durable than the old-fashioned sand-paper.

ONIONS FOR SLEEPLESSNESS.—Frank Buckland, writing on the subject of sleeplessness, said: "Everybody knows the taste of onions. This is due to a particular essential oil contained in the most valuable and healthy root. This oil has, I am sure, highly soporific powers. In my own case it never fails. If I am much pressed with work, and feel I shall not sleep, I eat two or three small onions, and the effect is magical."

CANDLE POWER.—The measuring of the candle power of a light is accomplished by comparing the shadow cast by a rod in the light of a standard candle with the shadow cast by the light to be tested. By moving the latter toward or away from the rod a point will be reached at which the shadow cast by the shadow cast by both lights will be of the same intensity. The intensity of the two lights is directly proportional to the squares of their distances from the shadows, i. e., suppose the light to be tested is three times the distance of the candle, its illuminating power is nine times as great.

Farm and Garden.

ONE RATION.—A very successful Western dairyman says he has only one ration for his cows, and that is crushed oats and bran.

PLASTER.—Use plenty of plaster in the fowl houses and in the stables. It is an excellent deodorizer, and absorbs gases and moisture. It is very cheap and cannot be used too freely.

SLEEPING ROOMS.—It has been shown by actual experiment that the water which streams down the insides of the window of a closed sleeping-room is so impregnated with the noxious exhalations of the sleepers that one drop is sufficient to poison a rabbit.

HINTS.—Inflammations are more safely and far more agreeably subdued by the application of warm water than cold. For burns, apply flour wet with cold water, as it quickly gives relief. To prevent mustard-plasters from blistering mix with the white of an egg.

SEVERE COLD.—Horses, cattle and sheep will endure severe cold if allowed exercise. This they will take in a yard or in a shed. The action of moving about even slowly keeps the blood circulating at the surface, and the animal remains warm unless exposed to the wind. In a still atmosphere the bodily head is carried about in the hair. If blown away a chill ensues. Hence animals in agrove or next a windbreak remain comfortable, except when exposed to rain.

BREEDING RABBITS.—In England the rabbit can be bred with profit by those who understand it. For example, in Norfolk, there is a large warren, comprising about 800 or 900 acres, where in summer evenings the visitor may see 500 or 600 rabbits playing about their burrows, and indulging in their merry gambols. From this warren the lessee contrives to clear about $3,000 annually. He drives the rabbits out of their burrows with paraffin oil, and for the oil and labor he has to pay $1,000 yearly. Ferrets are not allowed to enter the burrows, lest they should injure the skins. The owners of this warren often sends to London a consignment of seventy dozen rabbits.

WINDOW PLANTS.—An excellent plant for a large vase in the center of a bay window is Yucca formosa. This variety does not grow tall, and therefore will not obstruct the entrance of light, as some tall-growing varieties of this class of plants would. It has foliage of a pea-green color, each leaf being about an inch in width and two feet long, and these are produced so thickly on the short, stout stalk that a well grown specimen is a perfect mass of foliage, reaching out in all directions about the plant. It is valuable for house culture because it is so well able to withstand the effects of dry air, gas and heat.

CENSURING, with the desire to mortify, is very different from that suggestion of our errors, which it is the office of friendship to give; and we should judge differently of the same language if delivered with contrary intentions.

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FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

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TO FRIENDS AND READERS.

We hope that those of our friends and readers who are kindly in the habit of getting up clubs for THE POST, will enter the field as soon as possible this year and try to at least double their old lists. We are hoping to get a great many large sized clubs for the coming year, and trust every one of our present subscribers will make an extra effort to secure one or more new friends for us.

THE POST is much lower in price than any other first class family paper in the country, and we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands to whom it may still be a stranger, save, perhaps, by reputation. Of course we must depend in a great degree upon our present subscribers, friends and readers to show THE POST to their acquaintances and neighbors, and to speak a good word in our behalf. Their return for such efforts must be the pleasure they give to others, the consciousness of assisting in the good work of circulating THE POST, and enabling us to make it better, more useful and entertaining than ever before. Will they try and do it for us? Let each of our present friends and subscribers try to get one new subscriber at least.

Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

Ringing in the New.

The sound of bells have always been associated in Christian times with the New Year. Whether the heart interpret them as ringing a dirge for the twelve months just dead, or a peal of joy unto the newborn heir of the ages, must much depend upon the echoes they awake there. But whatever they be, it is rarely the awakening of sadness alone or unmixed joy. Life so blends its colors that with all, from the throne to the cottage, the rays of the light of happiness seldom come unbroken. Each has a share of sunshine and of shadow, and so, as the bells ring at New Year, Heaven is to be thanked that there are few who cannot hear in them some suggestions of pleasant hopes and memories, even if here and there mingled with an undertone of misery and of pain.

But as the soul joins in with the refrain of the day, and swells with exulting aspiration or droops in remembered sorrow, the grand melody that runs through existence should not be unheeded. It is not altogether built up of present hopes or past recollections, but enwraps the sublime strains of Duty. And in recommencing this song of Duty, when the overture of New Years, with its gayety and merriment, has been played, what shall be the key, the clef, and the leading tones—as musicians say—in which we shall sing it? As in the grandest music that ever pealed from organs made by men, so is this music, written by God on the human heart, few in its elements and simple in its playing. They are based on Duty, Content, Work, Method and Self Denial. Tuning our lives by these melodies, it will indeed be strange if we do not help to fill not only this New, but all our coming years with music.

Let those who make the start of the New Year a time for thought, remember that few things can so speedily ruin an individual or corrupt a nation as an unrestrained self-indulgence. When pleasure or ease comes to be the supreme motive, decay begins. This must ever be the case with imperfect and improvable beings. They cannot for ever sail with fair winds on placid seas; they must display energy, effort, striving for something better; they must lay down what is of less value before they can take up what is of more value. Would a man have sound health? He must sacrifice to a certain extent his desire for indulgence or his craving for gain or fame. Would he attain excellence in his work? He must resign a life of easy leisure. Would he be virtuous? He must resist temptation. Would he live for others? He must leave off living for himself.

While this virtue of Self-Denial is one of the dominant notes in Duty, it also chords with the more worldly sound of Method. Start the New Year by new methods. A good method will soon become a good habit, and good habits lead to good character. Thus it is mainly a matter of beginning and temperament. One man will have his papers and personal belongings in so confused a condition that many hours are spent in vain search for what he wants; while another can lay his hand on anything he owns in a moment. The thoughts of one will be in such disorder that they are practically valueless, while those of another will be classified and arranged so that each one is ready for use when needed. One has a plan for his life—elastic it may be, but still a plan. Another drifts on day by day, with the ever varying current of circumstances. All this may be the unconscious working out of the natural bent of mind; yet the methodical habit, like all others, may be cultivated and strengthened, and no time is better, or even so good, as that which begins with the New Year.

Besides, in the tasks that Method as a hand maid of duty may bring in, it should be remembered that, as a rule, it is not much work but too much worry that sours existence, breaks the health and eventually destroys life. The man or woman whose undivided attention, for the time being, is quietly devoted to the business on hand seldom is prostrated by overwork. This is because nothing is attempted which it is not reasonably expected can be done. The systematic worker can make a full day's or a full year's record, and at the end of the day or year be ready for rest. His operations, mental or other, are, to a satisfactory degree, forwarded or completed when the time comes for rest. The day's anxieties—if even there have been anxieties—are not prolonged in his dreams. One thing at a time is the safe motto. Following it, method and diligence will permit a distinct occupation for every convenient division of the working day or the working year.

If all try then to incorporate these notes in the year song that is before them, they will find that as it comes to an end twelve months hence, the time will not have been any the less exact or the accords less sweet because of them. While it may be said they belong to the lower part of the scale of existence, they still harmonize with all that is wisest, noblest and best. Because Work, Method and Self-Denial must permeate all the virtues that come from Duty, and consequently from Religion and from God. And to whomsoever works them into the Song of Life, our hearty wish that they, and all others, may have a Happy New Year, will certainly not be in vain.

IF the old saying is a fact that a certain particular personage "is not so black as he is painted," it is certainly truer that the world in general is a great deal better than many people pretend to believe. With very few exceptions, indeed, everybody would rather see everybody else happy than miserable, and, moreover, if it did not cost too much in trouble and other things, they would not mind putting themselves a little about to make them happy. Now, applying this reasoning to ourselves, we all can, if we will, do much towards increasing the enjoyments of others, at the same time enlarging our own. At present we have no doubt that many of the kind and thoughtful readers of THE POST after, or even before, getting through with it themselves, have it borrowed by the neighbors, who likewise enjoy it. Leaving out the question of its not being fair for one family to pay for a paper which another enjoys without its costing them anything, to that extent a double pleasure is conferred by the paper. But note how easily the enjoyment all around may be made both farther-reaching and juster to all. Let those who now borrow THE POST of their neighbors, subscribe for it themselves, and lend their copy to *other* neighbors. Thus next year those borrowing neighbors will like it so *they* will subscribe for it in their turn and *lend* it to still others. So THE POST'S circle of subscribers and readers will be continually widening. The subscribers will be making themselves and their neighbors better and happier, and they will give THE POST additional means for being happy by being able to add more and more names to its subscription list. Will the neighbors try it?

To become really polite, we must cultivate a kind and friendly feeling to all. The desire to please, to aid every one to the best of our ability, is the first and most important thing. Then may we study to advantage the most fitting and graceful expression of this honest feeling. Both of these can be inculcated most easily and thoroughly in childhood. Both can become habits of life.

HE who feels contempt for any fellow-creature, and expresses it by word or look or gesture, is guilty of an irremediable wrong to himself, his neighbor, and to society. He is not only inflicting needless and fruitless pain, but he is loosening the foundations of virtue and the ties which bind society together.

WE all have to go through a great deal in our lifetime, if we do any good or be in any way worthy. In this as in many other things, fear of encountering is the surest way of meeting; and those who are bravest in bearing are for the most part the least troubled in the end by the bother of minor things.

WHOEVER finds himself hampered in action by want of time, and sits down to discover the reason why, will soon perceive that he is in bondage to himself, either through idling, or self-love, or want of power, or that he has allowed himself to submit to some moral or mental or friendly tyranny.

MAN has no enemy half so powerful as his own selfish nature. A man is his thoughts; to change him they must be changed. Self is the witness of self. The only path to happiness is the power over self.

CHILDREN should never be taken to funerals, nor to sights that cause a sense of fear and dread combined with great grief, nor to sights which call forth pain and agony in man or in the lower animals.

To be able to fix the thoughts or the attention exclusively upon one subject, and to keep them there without wavering as long as is necessary, is a most important element of success in every occupation.

A DEGENERATED heart means a degenerated intellect. This degeneration means not only bad disposition; it means biassed and depraved intellectual quality—inability everywhere. And this must of necessity be so, because of the unity of nature.

THE religious impulse must be pure in order to manifest itself in the form of purity, and it must be sincere in order to be a beautiful form of expression.

THE thinking of a man out of right relations to God is not trustworthy—cannot be—nor on any themes which involve character.

The World's Happenings.

A dentist in St. Louis fills horses' teeth.

Shark steaks are sold in the Havana markets.

A girl in a Kalamazoo paper mill found $100 while sorting rags.

Platt county, Ill., is reported without a cash balance and a debt of $c.

A Dane has opened a wooden-shoe factory in New Richland, Minn.

French army officers are experimenting with the bicycle as an adjunct of war.

"Kasch pade for olde Knuze-papers" is the announcement at the door of a New York junk shop.

H. A. Adams, of Orange county, Fla., has produced a sweet potato twenty-eight inches long.

The tallest boy in Lancaster is George Kersey, son of Dr. Kersey. He is 13 years old and 7 feet high.

A butcher in Butternut, Wis., found a $5 gold piece in the stomach of a steer which he killed last week.

Confederate bills are now and then presented in good faith by negroes in the South in payment for goods bought.

A pill-swallowing match is about the latest. An Illinois druggist proposes it. Contents of proposed pills not stated.

A nickel was an Oil City, Pa., lad's reward for returning $300 to the husband of a woman who had lost the money on the street.

An Alabama man was recently arrested for putting a counterfeit dollar into a church contribution box and taking out good coin in change.

All children have not become skeptics. A letter addressed to Santa Claus, Clarion, Pa., was dropped in the Clarion postoffice one evening last week.

A somnambulist in Albany, Ga., noted for his sleep-walking feats, shot one of his fingers off the other night while fighting two imaginary burglars.

A judge in one of the Connecticut courts found his grandson among a number of boys brought before him for coasting on the public streets last week.

When Minnie Hauk sang at Tin Cup, Ariz., twelve Apache chiefs retired behind the theatre after the entertainment and drew lots to see who should marry her.

Eighty-seven per cent. of the population of London do not go to church. It is estimated that the non-church-goers in American cities are about 70 per cent. of the population.

A Brooklyn woman who broke one of her legs by falling down a flight of stairs has just recovered $1,500 damages from the owner of the house in which the accident occurred.

"Boose, the busy man's lunch, 5 cts.;" "Nose Paint, 5 cts.," "Blood sizzler and eye buiger, 5 cts.," are some of the signs conspicuously displayed in Chicago barrel-house whisky saloons.

The Crosby county, Texas, *Clarion* records, editorially, the fact that "Sam Beasley's second wife, whom he married last month, is knitting him a pair of warm woolen stockings for the winter."

A man living near Buffalo River, D. T., visited Moorehead, Minn., and was measured for a coffin, which he took home with him. He was not at all ill, but he knew he would need the coffin some time.

A soldier from Fort Pembina met a citizen of St. Vincent, Minn., near the international line and expressed a desire to try on the citizen's clothes. He was kindly permitted to do so, whereupon he ran away with them.

Within three weeks William Kline, of Michigan, committed theft, was arrested, convicted, sentenced, tried to escape by jumping from a moving train and was killed, and now his body has been cut up by medical students.

A pint of good hot coffee and a sizable piece of bread are sold for one cent to poor men, women and children, from stands established by ladies of a church in New York, at the Brooklyn bridge and ferries in that city.

On Sunday last, at the close of one of the masses in the Church of Our Lady of the Valley, at Newark, N. J., Rev. Mr. Callen, the pastor, turned to the altar, laid his hand upon it and cursed a saloon in Orange Valley which has been selling liquor to minors.

A female prisoner who was taken to the Hudson county, New Jersey, jail is awaiting trial in an apartment of the institution, as it was found impossible on account of her great size to squeeze her through the entrances to any of the cells. She is said to weigh over 300 pounds.

John Symons, of Hollidaysburg, Pa., threw on his fireplace, for a back log, a large unsplit oak stick with a hole in a decayed knot on one side of it. Before the log began to blaze three rattlesnakes of a good size crawled out of the hole. Symons killed them with a pair of tongs.

A plaintiff who alleges that the defendant promised to marry her in 1855, and has not done so yet, has begun suit for $20,000 against him in Pittsburg. She avers that the defendant has regularly set times for the ceremony twice a year since the date specified, but always found some excuse.

Fast driving (exceeding seven miles an hour) was the charge laid against a man arrested the other day in Central Park, New York, and he indignantly offered to prove that his horse couldn't be made to cover over four or five miles an hour under any circumstances. He was allowed to sign his own bond.

There is a very mean man in Portland, Oregon. He keeps a big store in the centre of the city. Several nights ago a special policeman found the store door unlocked, and sent a hack to the merchant's house to notify him. The merchant walked down and locked the door, but left the policeman to pay the hackman.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

BY W. E. J.

I am tired, lay me down;
Welcome death: I sleep at last:
I have fought, 'tut gained no crown;
"One of a crowd" is all my Past.
Yet I had hoped a course to run
Should bring me honor, wealth and fame;
Or if not all, but only one,
Yet I, at least, should make a name.

Well, some must stand and some must fa
Some must be leaders, some be led;
The happy chance comes not to all;
Some fight for honors, some for bread.
When the brave ender you decree
Honors and rank, and royal smile,
Forget not, men as good as he
Are standing in the rank and file.

The Miller's Daughter.

BY M. H. A.

ABOUT Griston Mill the shadows of night are creeping, cool and refreshing; the sun, in undimmed glory, in clouds of richest crimson and brightest gold has sunk to rest behind the hills. A faint sighing breeze comes up from the river, while low about the meadows hangs a misty veil.

A thrush is singing gaily in the trees close by, and, but for its song and the rushing of the water in the mill-dam, there would be perfect restful silence.

Presently a sound that is neither song of bird nor noise of waters breaks upon the warm still night air; from that old road below the meadow come the roll of wheels and the sound of a horse's feet. A dog-cart containing two men is passing.

The younger of the two is remarkably handsome, with the beauty of classical features and dark Southern eyes and skin.

"Used up with your journey, old fellow?" asks the elder of the two.

"Rather—it is so confounding hot!" is the answer.

"Anything going on in town?' is Ralph Gerard's next question.

His curiosity on that point being set at rest, there is silence between them again until the moon comes in sight; then Wynyard Gerard rouses himself.

"Pretty little place," he murmurs.

"That is Griston Mill—belongs to old Ashton. He lives there with his daughter—rather a pretty little girl—quite a rustic belle. That is she against the porch now; but you are too far off to see her face."

"Tolerably good figure," remarks Wynyard nonchalantly.

She is indeed pretty, with the gleam of pale gold in her soft fair hair, and the grace of a lily in her attitude as she stands leaning against the porch, with her hands uplifted and clasped behind her head, looking away to the river beyond the meadows. Above her the roses and clematis and jessamine twine, and drop their petals upon her gown.

An old man at this moment comes out of the cottage.

Though his face is rugged and weather-beaten, it bears a strong resemblance to that of the girl.

"Did you hear the sound of wheels, Clytie?" the old man asks.

"Yes, father," she answers; "it was the Squire and a strange gentleman with him."

"'Twas his cousin then, Mr. Wynyard Gerard—he that has never been to Gerard Court before. I heard that he was coming soon."

"Why did he never come to the Court before, father?" asks the girl.

"It's a long story, that, Clytie;" and the old man sits down upon the little bench in the porch, and knocks the ashes out of his "churchwarden," and prepares to fill it.

She waits patiently till he has puffed away for a few minutes, then, noting that he does not speak, she grows impatient, and says—

"Father, have you forgotten that you were going to tell me why Mr. Wynyard Gerard has never been to the Court before?

"If I remember right, this is how it all came about. The old Squire was always strict and masterful with his sons, and the younger, Mr. Wynyard's father that was, was always headstrong and wild, and no one but his father, and not often he could curb him. Ay, but he was a fine lad—a fine lad; and, when he grew up, he could never stand the old Squire's ways, and the quarrels between them grew worse, until one day he left the old place, vowing he would never return. He was the old Squire's favorite son, and it 'most broke his heart to let him go like that; but his pride—the pride of the Gerards has always been their misfortune—would not let him promise to allow the lad to go a bit his own way. He went right away to a foreign part, and for years the old Squire heard nothing of him. One day news came to the Court that he was going to be married to a foreign lady who had nothing in the world but her beauty. The squire was very wroth about his marrying a foreigner, and wrote him if he married her he should no longer consider him a son of his. The letter was returned with another that said it was "all for love and the world well lost." They say the Squire swore a fearful oath that neither Wynyard nor his should never enter the Court during his—the Squire's—lifetime."

"Well," says the girl breathlessly, as the old man pauses, "did he marry her, after all?"

"Ay, he married her in spite of the Squire; but she died a few years afterwards. The Squire's oath was never broken. Now Mr. Ralph is Squire, and, he and Mr. Wynyard being cousins, maybe they have agreed to let by-gones be by-gones. The Gerards are all fair; but they do say Mr. Wynyard is as dark as the foreign lady his mother was, and not a bit like a Gerard, save his frown, which is just the old Squire's over again."

The girl asks him no more questions, but sits with her hands folded on her lap and her eyes fixed on the moonlit river, going over again in her thoughts the story of Mr. Wynyard's father, who married the beautiful foreign lady, and told the Squire it was "all for love and the world well lost."

An hour or two later Wynyard Gerard is smoking his last cigar up at the Court, and wondering how to kill time in such a dead-and-alive place.

"It is bad enough up in town, but what can a fellow do with himself down here?" he mutters. Then a brilliant idea occurs to him. "I'll trot down to the mill to-morrow."

On the following afternoon, about five o'clock, Wynyard saunters down to the mill smoking a cigar. Before him stands the old gray structure, and near by is the tiny bridge beneath which is the mill-dam.

There too is the miller, in his white dusted clothes, standing in the doorway, and on the floor round about him are full white bags of meal.

But the girl is not visible. "The little rustic belle—where is she?" wonders Wynyard. Perhaps she is hidden behind that lattice-paned window over which ivy and clematis creep, and before which is placed a box of glowing scarlet geraniums and golden calceolaria.

Wynyard goes up and introduces himself; and he is not a little amused at the simple reverence with which he is greeted. The Squire's cousin is invited with old fashioned respect to enter the parlor of their cottage.

Behind the profusion of geraniums which attracted his notice the young fellow's quick eye detect a fair shy face; and a timid voice says a few words to him in low sweet tones that go straight to his very susceptible heart.

But his bright easy manners and evident desire to please her have their effect, and before long her shyness wears off, her face flushes as she listens, and she looks up at him with eyes blue as speedwells.

"By Jove," he says to himself, "Ralph was right! She is a confoundedly pretty little girl—quite as pretty as Hermione Thynne! I'll be hanged if she isn't!" he finishes.

To utter that sentiment to a living soul would be rank heresy, for to Miss Hermione Thynne he is supposed to be paying his addresses.

Early this season he was caught by her golden hair and shapely figure and fortune of thirty thousand pounds.

But it is no disloyalty to her, he tells himself, to get up an arcadian flirtation with this little rustic belle; and he proceeds forthwith to carry out his design.

The miller, after giving Wynyard a very friendly welcome, goes back to his mill, dismissed thereto by the thoughtfulness of his guest, who begged that he might not be in the way or hindrance.

He would be well entertained, he assured his host, if the young lady would show him the roses he had heard Mrs. Gerard speak so highly of.

Wynyard walks in the garden with the miller's pretty daughter, uttering soft nothings to her in a voice that says more than his words, and looking into her eyes with glances that express more than either, and doing it all in a manner that makes her foolish little heart beat faster with a feeling unknown till this hour and undefinable.

"What is your name? You have not yet told me your name," says Wynyard presently, as they turn once more to walk up the garden.

"Clytemnestra"; but my father calls me 'Clyte,'" she answers.

"'Clytemnestra'!" he echoes; then says to himself, "do they go in for the classics in this Arcadia? I must ask Ralph." Aloud he says, "Where did you get such a pretty name from?"

"My mother found it in a book," she answers shyly.

"Most assuredly then they go in for the classics in these wilds!" he tells himself; and then he says softly, "And may I call you 'Clytie'"—lingering on the name—"as your father does?"

"Yes," she answers, in low coy tones; and Wynyard does not fail to avail himself of the privilege before he departs for the Court.

Ralph doesn't know when, at dinner, Wynyard asks him whether the natives study the classics in these parts.

When questioned as to why he asks, Wynyard merely replies that he was passing the mill that afternoon, and heard the miller call a girl—"His daughter would it be?" he asks very carelessly—"Clytemnestra."

"Oh, yes, I remember," says Mrs. Gerard, "his daughter is called 'Clytemnestra'! Yes—very odd to meet with such an out-of-the-way name, is it not? But I believe her mother was a very superior person; and I have heard that she used to write really beautiful poetry—so our Rector's wife told me."

After this it somehow happens that Wynyard Gerard and the miller's pretty daughter admire, curiously enough, the same walks; for, if Clytie is walking by the river, in the shade of the alders, sooner or later the Squire's cousin is to be seen advancing from the opposite direction.

So it comes that there are many meetings and many walks by the river side and through the meadows in the cool of the day which the miller knows nothing about and never suspects.

But at last even he notices how the girl's face changes when Mr. Wynyard Gerard call at the mill or rides past.

"What has Mr. Gerard been saying to you?" he asks her sternly one day, struck by the sudden flushing of her face when Wynyard's tall figure is seen approaching in the distance; and the girl, startled and confused, cannot answer him.

Her father goes out shaking his head significantly and muttering to himself. He is a proud old man, and comes from an unbroken line of yeomen—a race as proud in its way as that of the lords of the manor, the Gerards of the Court.

But still the meetings of the walk continue.

It is the old, old story that is once more whispered by the starlit river; and Wynyard wonders, as he looks into the girl's eyes, with the shy half-glad light in their blue depths, if she is conscious of her loveliness.

Then he begins uneasily to ask himself how all this will end, and at last finds himself wishing with heart and soul that he had met this girl before certain words had been spoken to Hermione Thynne.

One evening, when they are by the river-side, he tells her he is going away. He is touched and maddened by the look of bitter grief on that beautiful face that was all smiles a while ago, and he clasped her in his arms and whispers that he loves her.

Her face is pale with the dread of the coming parting, but as he speaks the rosy flush of hope steals over it again, and Wynyard flings prudence and the prospect of thirty thousand pounds to the winds.

In a few brief hurried words he tells Clytie everything—that even now, while he is with her, the preparations for his marriage are going on in town, but that he loves her—her only.

If she tells him to do so, he will break his promise to the woman that he has engaged himself to marry, and thus will give up even honor for her sake.

He leaves the decision in Clytie's hands, and waits for her to speak.

The girl has withdrawn herself from his clasp, and has laid her arms upon the gnarled trunk of an old pollard, and hidden her face upon them.

In the utter abandonment of her attitude, in the droop of her fair head, there is such a suggestion of utter hopelessness that he is filled with bitter self-reproach.

He speaks to her again and again before she raises her head, and when he sees her face he is awed and startled by the look upon it.

She shrinks from him when he would draw her into his arms again.

"No, no!" she cries, with a despairing ring in her voice. "Go back to that other girl, your promised wife, and leave me to try to forget that I ever knew you."

"Do you wish me to marry a woman for whom I have not a particle of affection?" he asks bitterly.

"Hush," says Clytie—"she is your promised wife!"—then, with a pitiful wailing cry that maddens him—"Knowing that, why, ah, why have you sought me?"

"Do you want to drive me mad?" he cries, catching and holding her hands in both his. "Child, do not look at me with such innocent sorrowful eyes, as though it was a sin to tell you I love you!"

"And," says the girl slowly and gently, "what is it but a sin?"

"Clytie," he responds patiently, "I cannot let a promise given before I knew what true love meant ruin both our lives. I will marry none but you!"

"No," she says resolutely, "I will not marry you; and this must be our last meeting. We must never see each other willingly again; and, if we should meet by chance, promise me you will never refer to this night."

She stands before him with such a look of solemn resoluteness that bitter as it is to him to acquiesce in this, yet he gives her the promise and in sorrow they utter their last "good-bye" and part.

Wynyard Gerard goes back to town, and is lost in the whirl of the London season; but there comes to him at times gracious memories of two fair little hands held out in welcome—of a sweet voice speaking words of greeting.

* * * * * * *

"Ralph," says the Squire's pretty little wife to him one day, "don't you remember, when Wynyard was down here before his marriage, how very often he used to go to the mill—I dare say oftener than we knew of even? Well, I hope he was not carrying on a flirtation with the miller's daughter, to break her heart in the end. If he did, it was too bad of him!"

"'It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,'"

murmured Ralph. "My dear, Wynyard was always an awful flirt."

"Well, I hope I may be mistaken, but I have my fears," says his wife.

"Had you not better find out if it is possible?" suggests the Squire.

"Yes, I think I will," assents Mrs. Gerard thoughtfully.

And that very afternoon—a clear, fresh, autumn afternoon—she drives slowly past the mill in her pony carriage. Very slowly she passes it, taking in every detail of the cottage and its surroundings.

A girl comes out of the half-open door—a girl with a sad pale face across which a shadow lies; and Mrs. Gerard, seeing her face, knows instinctively that her fears are not groundless, and that Wynyard Gerard is not forgotten by the miller's daughter.

"How could he be so heartless!" she concludes, finishing the story of her afternoon's drive.

"Don't know at all, my dear; but Wynyard always was rather heartless," answers the Squire, jingling the money in his pocket and whistling softly.

"Ralph, you don't seem to care at all; and she looked so sad, poor girl," says his wife reproachfully.

"My dear, I assure you I am very sorry indeed; unfortunately being sorry will not help matters. We cannot unmarry Wynyard now, you know; and one doesn't exactly wish for a *mesalliance* in the family either," adds the Squire, who is not less kind-hearted, but only more practical than his impulsive wife.

"Of course not; still Wynyard shouldn't have flirted with her," stoutly persists Mrs. Gerard.

"I quite agree with you on that point," returns Ralph.

"Ralph," begins his wife solemnly after a brief pause, "what if she doesn't even know of Wynyard's marriage yet, but is still hoping that he is coming back again?"

The Squire looks rather grave.

"And," continues Mrs. Gerard, "how could she know unless Wynyard himself told her?"

"He wouldn't tell her," hastily puts in the Squire.

"Then, Ralph, what is to be done? It seems cruel, if it is true that Wynyard has been flirting with her, to leave her in ignorance of his marriage."

"Couldn't you let her know somehow?" is Ralph's suggestion.

"Now, Ralph, how would you like such a task?" remonstrates his wife.

"Not at all, my dear," answers Ralph, with startling energy.

"Neither do I," retorts Mrs. Gerard; and that ends the conversation.

But she finds some excuse to go the mill to speak with Clytie.

She is charmed with the girl's grave sweet manners; but there is a certain reserve about her that makes the lady resolve to put off any mention of Wynyard, be it ever so slight, until she can win her confidence. She comes away from the mill feeling keenly interested in Clytie.

"Ralph, it is very strange, but do you know there is something about that girl—I don't know what—that, if I had not known her to be Ashton's daughter, would force me to say she was a lady? She speaks nicely, too, and has evidently been well-educated," announces Mrs. Gerard on her return.

And one day Clytie learns the news that Mrs. Gerard has been waiting to tell her of Wynyard's marriage.

* * * * * *

Mrs. Gerard's interest in Clytie increases slowly but surely with the passing months. The girl learns much unconsciously from her frequent intercourse with the well-bred woman—speech and manners lose even their faint touch of rusticity.

But a sad bereavement falls suddenly upon Clytie,

When the spring is breaking and making the earth gay, the poor old miller is taken seriously ill and dies. Clytie is thus left alone in the world.

It is then, when going to comfort her, that Mrs. Gerard hears the story of those few summer weeks when Wynyard was staying at the Court.

The girl tells it very quietly without sob or moan, with her fair head resting against Mrs. Gerard's breast and her hand clasped in hers.

Shortly after this, when the miller's old desk is opened, a packet of papers directed to Clytie is found to contain the story of the mother she can but faintly remember.

She was a lady—the daughter of a man of good position. A step-mother's dislike and a careless father's indifference as to how she was treated drove her from her home and into marrying John Ashton.

He was a stalwart young miller then, a perfect specimen of the fine old English yeoman, and he loved her with all his honest faithful heart.

Mrs. Gerard is delighted with this little romance when Clytie puts the papers into her hand, and a firm friendship springs up between the wife of the Squire and the miller's daughter.

* * * * * * *

Nearly four years pass, and then one day there came to the quiet old Court news of the death of Wynyard's wife and of his decision to go abroad for a time, with a request that they will take charge of his little son during his absence.

This request is readily granted, and little Lionel Wynyard Gerard, aged two years, comes to the old Court.

The little fellow has Wynyard's own dark Southern eyes and regular clear-cut features, together with the rosy tints of childhood.

He is not very long at the Court before Mrs. Gerard has the following conversation with the Squire.

"Ralph, I have a little plan in my head. I expect that in the end Wynyard will leave Lionel with us. He will not care to keep up that great house in town now that there is only himself; and, if he goes abroad often, as he is pretty sure to do—you know he was always restless—Lionel, while he is so young, will be rather a trouble than otherwise. Well, what I am a going to say is this. In a year or two the child be old enough to read. Now, Ralph, supposing I were to engage Clytie Ashton as his governess, she would be quite competent for some years to come—to teach him, in fact, until he is old enough to be sent to the school."

"But surely," exclaims the Squire, "you are not going to educate a child only two years old!"

"Now, Ralph, how foolish! Of course not!" answers his wife. "I said in a year or two"; and in the meantime I should keep Clytie as my companion. I have often thought I should like to have a com-

panion; it is very dull for me when you are away whole days shooting and hunting. She could help me with my correspondence and fancy-work, and plenty of things. What do you think about it?"

And it comes to pass that a few weeks later Clytie goes to live at the Court as Mrs. Gerard's companion.

When the summer comes around again it brings with it the daily expectation of Wynyard's arrival at the Court; and late one sunny afternoon the dog-cart and Ralph Gerard are starting to fetch him from the station.

"I will take the boy with me," says Ralph, coming to his wife and Clytie, who are at tea under the trees on the lawn.

Lionel, who is playing on the grass at their feet, looks up at the Squire's words, and runs to him, lisping, "Yes, me will go wis you to fetch papa," being perfectly well aware that uncle Ralph—as he has been taught to call him—and the dog-cart are going to fetch his father.

"Indeed you will do no such thing!" exclaims Mrs. Gerard hastily. "Ralph, how can you think of it, when you know you must drive through the village to the town, and the fever is positively raging there just now? I would not have Lionel to go within a mile of it!"

"Ah, I forgot the fever! What a nuisance!" says the Squire; and he hurries away.

An hour later Mrs. Gerard and Clytie are pacing under the trees, waiting. There is a sound of wheels in the distance, coming every second nearer; then footsteps draw near, and two men's voices are heard, one of which sets Clytie's heart beating as she told herself it never would again. The two men came within sight.

"Lionel, Lionel!" shouts Ralph.

"Come, Lionel—here is papa at last!" says Mrs. Gerard, catching up the boy and going to meet them.

She puts down the child, and he runs fearlessly to the father who, in the fast-forgetting existence of childhood, is hardly more than a name to him.

Wynyard stoops and takes him up in his arms—if there is one thing he loves on earth, it is this little child—and talks to him, trying jealously to recall to the child's mind little incidents from the past in which he himself was concerned.

But Lionel has forgotten everything, and only shakes his head when asked if he remembers this or that.

Then he on his part begins to lisp something or other about Clytie. Clytie! With the name a flood of painful recollections sweeps over Wynyard, and then his face flushes.

"Oh, where is Clytie, by-the-bye?" says Mrs. Gerard, with assumed carelessness. "Clytie, here, is my cousin Mr. Wynyard Gerard—Miss Ashton, Wynyard."

And Wynyard bows over little Lionel's black head with as much self-possession as he can muster.

Shouts of ringing baby-laughter reach Wynyard Gerard's ears an hour later when he is dressing for dinner.

He moves to the window and looks out. On the lawn Clytie is playing with Lionel. She is already dressed for dinner, in a soft white gown.

Lionel is trotting after her, his great dark eyes all aglow with excitement. He clutches at her gown; she eludes his grasp and retreats from him, running backwards. The child gives a cry of disappointment, and she catches him in her arms and showers kisses upon his rosy lips.

They make a lovely picture, the girl and child—she with her golden hair coiled round a head shaped like that of the classic Clytie, the other "running over" with curls of silky blackness.

Wynyard watches them till the gong sounds and rouses them with a start.

"Wynyard Gerard, you've been a fool once in the course of your life," he mutters to his reflection in the glass.

* * * * * * *

Over their wine Ralph tells Wynyard of the little romance discovered after the miller's death; of the subsequent—so he puts it, for he does not want Wynyard to think he knows anything of that by gone summer's history—interest he and his wife took in Clytie, and of their finally inducing her to live at the Court; of the affection they both feel for her and she feels for them.

Wynyard listens in silence; but his cousin can plainly see that he is keenly interested.

He has very much improved during the past four years. He has lost something of his old self-consciousness of power.

The weeks go by, but still he stays on at the Court. He knows now—he cannot hide it from himself—that his heart's great object is to win back the girl he loves.

And now a dark cloud comes over the sunlit eaves of the stately old house. Hitherto the inmates have been a cure from the dread fever that is making so many houses desolate in the village; but one hot breathless summer hour it steals into the Court, and takes the sweet little child into its embrace.

For many days little Lionel is battling for life, and none can tell what the issue will be.

In the many sorrowful vigils beside the fever-stricken child, Wynyard Gerard and Clytie discover the best and truest side of each other's nature as they never would have discovered it in unshadowed happiness.

All that is manly and strong and tender in Wynyard comes out now, and effaces from the girl's heart the memory of the empty follies and graver faults of his earlier youth.

There comes at last the crisis, and Mrs. Gerard and Clytie are watching silently, for the change must be near.

Wynyard is pacing up and down the lawn under the window.

The dawn is just breaking, the stars are fading away in the soft gray sky; there is a faint stirring in the leaves and a distant twitter of birds, when a light footfall is heard, and Wynyard, turning, sees Clytie. His heart grows cold within him, but he will try to save her the pain of having to deliver the message. He whispers the words—

"He is dead?"

"No, no; he lives—he will live now!" Clytie answers him, her voice and lips quivering.

Some hours later the two are walking together, and the girl's words are in answer to the man's question.

"Stay!"—forcing herself to speak bravely. "Have you forgotten that, though my mother was a lady, my father was not a gentleman, and therefore I am not what the world can call a lady? You—you"—faltering—"thought of this once, I think—long ago."

"I could hardly dare to hope that you would forgive me," he says, with great bitterness in tone—the shame and humility on his face are very real. "Clytie"—catching and holding her hands, and speaking with passionate earnestness—"is there anything under heaven that I can do to make you love me once again?"

"No," she answers softly; there is no need to 'love you once again,' for I have never ceased to love you, dear."

And he, seeing her eyes full of tears, but a smile on her lips, understands, and then draws her to him in a glad unbroken silence.

Out of the Depths.

BY W. B. THOMSON.

OLD Bumpas certainly was a brute to work with.

It is true I had been told as much before I accepted the position of assistant manager at the Greystone Collieries; but I hardly expected such a series of obstacles to be thrown in my way.

I was sanguine, and believed (when Mr. Delve, the more active of the two somewhat sleepy partners in the firm of Cashmore, Delve, and Co., told me that they wanted my experience, derived in a neighboring mine, to help them to win the famous Nine-foot Steam Coal), I believed that I was the man to do it.

So, as the pits were not in a prosperous state, I took the post offered me, feeling sure that the proprietors (and I with them) were on the eve of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

But Bumpas made my life bitter to me.

He was a man of sixty, one of the few remaining colliery managers who had received his certificate simply because he was in charge when the Act came into force which made the passing a stiff examination compulsory.

He was an uneducated fellow, but shrewd enough to pick the brains of his subordinates, and by bluster and brag pass off their discoveries as his own.

When he found that I had no intention of playing into his hands, he did all he could to keep from me the maps and plans of the underground workings, while any explanation I asked for as to the slovenly records of dialings, or inaccurate accounts of the cost of work done, was put off day by day under one pretext or another.

Not only so, but it was obvious that the underground bailiffs were in a conspiracy to keep from me all information as to the management of the colliery.

To such an extent was this carried that I began to suspect that some underhand work was being connived at by the manager.

My suspicions were confirmed when, one night, I found the chief engineman asleep and very much the worse for drink. I woke him and told him I should report him in the morning to Mr. Bumpas, who would doubtless dismiss him.

"Dismiss me!" he cried, with a drunken laugh. "Why, you meddlesome greenhorn, old Bumpie daren't do it; I'd ruin him if he did. And have a care, young man, or I'll pay you out some day."

The manager, on being told what I had seen, laughed an ugly laugh and shrugging his shoulders, sneered, "You're young, Mr. Leekins, and your zeal outruns your discretion. I have absolute confidence in my enginemen."

I had, then, two enemies about the place; so I determined for the future to keep my own counsel, and find out all I could, and have no dealings of any kind with the manager, who, though nominally my superior, never went underground, and was powerless to hinder me from prosecuting the search ordered by our mutual master, Mr. Delve.

So one morning I took a good supply of candles, and went down directly after the colliers had begun work, ready for a long day's exploration. (The mine was not a fiery one.)

I did not want to be hampered with a lamp, as I was bent on following up some abandoned workings, where I hoped to find traces of the valuable coal which I was expected to discover.

The banksmen, after seeing the workmen down the pit, had gone to breakfast; so Figgis, the engine-driver, who sullenly answered my "Good morning," was the only person who knew I was going to the mine.

At the bottom I saw one of the deputy-bailiffs talking to some colliers; but as I didn't want to be disturbed in my day's work, I refused his offer to accompany me, and told him I should work my way along the East Road and ascend by another shaft, which was half a mile nearer to my lodgings.

So I strode on alone by the feeble light of the "dip" stuck, collier fashion in my hat.

But a few hundred yards along this road another branch turned off northwards; this I knew, must lead (I had never been there) to the deserted workings of which I was in search.

I had brought a rough tracing with me showing the zig-zag roads which led to the spot I wished to reach, and, by the help of my compass, made capital progress.

As I expected, I soon came to a steep incline, down which I scrambled and slipped as best I could; for a thick runnel of water streamed by my side, and every step was planted in greasy mud. Exercising great caution, I safely reached the bottom, narrowly escaping a splash into a big pool of water which filled the lowest of the long-abandoned headings.

Here I was, then, on the very spot where I hoped to find the indications of the coveted seam of coal.

Eagerly I set to work; though the little pick I carried in my belt was ill-fitted for such a heavy undertaking.

But excitement kept me from feeling fatigue, as, hour after hour, I dug and hammered in shale and rock, resting only to take voluminous notes, and enter measurements in my grimy diary.

Everything favored the theory I had formed. If only I had a few workmen here, I fancied I could prove beyond doubt the truth of my surmises.

Musing thus, and poking about my pick, I came upon some coal—buried under mud and water, and much discolored, but still unmistakably coal.

In my eagerness, I went to work to work on all fours, and soon made out a passage leading upwards.

All idea for going back for help was at once abandoned.

The ground was very crumbly and slippery, and the undertaking was a highly dangerous one; but at twenty-five one does not stop to think of things like that.

Once up this steep, low passage, and I should know whether I was on the right track or not.

So I began to crawl snake-like up the narrow funnel which was about a yard in diameter—at such a moment what cared I for such perils as falling stones or crumbling debris.

I was at the top.

Again I set to work with my pick heedless of time or of aught else than my engrossing search, till at last every other feeling gave way to a wild, intense joy.

Beyond all doubt, here were the distinctive signs which characterised the top of the (to me) well-known "nine-feet seam."

The fortunes of Cashmore, Delve, and Co., were made, and, with theirs, mine too; who could doubt it?

The wisdom of my decision to come to Greystone was more than justified.

My darling Amy! Not only had I come where I was near her, but my change of fortune would remove her father's objections to our marriage.

Hurrah! hurrah! and, in the exuberance of my spirits, I gave three ringing cheers.

Whether it was owing to the vibration caused by my voice I cannot say; but at this moment I noticed a huge block of stone immediately above my head tottering in its loose bed of broken shale.

There was but one hope of safety. Quick as lightning I dived headfirst down the slippery passage, so that I escaped a blow on any vital part, but the next moment I was struck on the legs with a force which caused the intensest agony.

I must have fainted had I not rolled into the pool of water which I have described as occupying the space at the bottom of the passage which I had ascended.

My candle had gone out as my cap rolled away in the water; and, worse still, I was a prisoner, half-buried under the rubbish which the huge stone had brought down with it.

The pain caused by the wounds in my legs was almost unbearable, and it was only by supporting my weight on my hands (which were plunged deep in the icy-cold water) that I could keep my head out of the pool, and so postpone suffocation.

Clearly this could not last long; my waning strength must soon go—and then the end!

But the love of life is very strong, and, commanding myself with an effort, I groped all round, first with one hand then with the other, till I touched ground, high enough to support my head and shoulders if I could only reach it.

Convinced that this was my one chance of life, I twisted my legs round in their covering of rubbish (it was not so heavy but that, if uninjured, I could have struggled free from it) and, screaming with torture, just reached my resting-place, and then—swooned away.

When I came to myself, after I know not how long a period of unconsciousness, the burning agony in my limbs had induced a feverish, half-delirious state.

I was trembling with terror; my nerves too unstrung to trace the natural causes of the rumbling, rushing noises which filled my ears.

Momentarily I looked for some supernatural presence to reveal itself even in that utter darkness.

My blood ran cold as a pale, green, ghostly glimmer caught my straining eyes.

I could bear it no more—I must have light.

I felt in my pocket for the box of matches I always carried—it was there, but reduced to a pulp by the water in which I had been wallowing.

Hoping against hope, I took the matches out one by one, and tried to strike a light. Alas! in vain.

Then the very despair which fell upon me sobered my senses.

Those sounds that had so scared me were but water gurgling among the rocky walls of my prison—railway trains rushing overhead, where shone the glorious sun which I should behold no more.

And this green shimmer. Surely it must be the phosphorescent gleam which, I had read, certain fungi give forth. Could I, perchance, see the time by it?

I held my watch close to a patch of it which grew near my head, and, painfully gazing, guessed rather than saw that the hands pointed to four o'clock—the time when the colliers would be thronging towards the shaft, their day's work done!

I put all my strength into a long yell for help.

Fool that I was—the watch was not going; it had stopped when I fell into the pool, doubtless; and by this time I was the only man in all the gloomy passages of my prison and grave in one.

There was no chance of rescue, no possibility of escape; for as I went over the whole question in my mind, it was clear that I had cut myself off from all help.

First of all the engine-driver was my bitter enemy, and certainly would not trouble himself as to my safety.

Then the men I had spoken to in the morning would suppose that I had long since found my way home by the other shaft, as I had told them I should do.

Bumpas knew little and cared less, about my movements, which had grown to be largely independent of him; and no one else could tell how I was occupied.

Back my brains as I would, I could see no hope of assistance; nothing for it but to lie there in pain and darkness, tortured with hunger till Death, the dreaded one, should at last come as a welcome release from suffering.

But Nature is merciful in this too—that anguish and misery act as an anodyne on our poor frames; and I slept at last, or sank, at any rate, into a dull stupor, filled with nightmare fancies.

It seemed to me that I was buried, and (presumably) dead; yet all the while ully conscious of the loathsome, crawling things that were——

Faugh! with a start I woke, to feel some wet, warm thing passing over my hands, my face—some of those terrors I had dreamed of, doubtless.

But, no! a whining sound met my ears; then, as I stirred, a joyful Yap! yap!—and I clutched in hands trembling with joy, the shaggy head of my dear old terrier Toby.

Thank Heaven! I was saved.

* * * *

The manner of my rescue was this:—My landlady was a kindly woman, who took an almost motherly interest in "her young gentleman," as she called me—her lodger.

When I did not return after twelve hours' absence the good soul grew anxious, and went over to Dr. Bell's, whose house was my frequent haunt, (I was engaged to his only daughter, Amy) to see if by any chance I had dropped in there without first coming home to change my soiled pit clothes.

There she found the doctor himself, just returned from his day's round and explained matters to him.

"I will get up a relief party to find the poor fellow," he at once said, and hurried indoors to make light of the circumstances that his pet child might not fret overmuch.

But she wasn't one of those who lose their heads in time of need; her shrewd suggestion was that Toby should go with the searchers. Toby was a present to her from me, and, whenever he was let loose, would make straight for my lodgings, and even follow me on to the colliery.

After some demur Dr. Bell accepted the four-footed recruit, and started for the pit top.

On the road he overtook the deputy-bailiff to whom I had spoken before I set out on my mad enterprise. He, knowing the way I had taken, conducted the expedition (a dozen miners having joined on the way along the East Road,) Toby, held by a long cord, going first.

As they went along, the dog was sniffing about from side to side, as if he smelt rats, or such "small deer." But when he reached the turning into the deserted North branch—which none of the party dreamed of entering—the quadruped showed the most determined eagerness to go that way, straining at the string, and whining so piteously, as he looked up into the doctor's face, that he, the deputy, and two other men followed the canine leader, while the others went on to explore the branches further along the road.

At the last turning, Toby's excitement grew so intense that, breaking away from the doctor, he rushed on to be the first bearer of the good news to his old and loved master.

So, revived by brandy, eased somewhat by the bandages and slings which Dr. Bell improvised, I was carried as gently as might be to his house.

With Amy installed as head nurse, I recked little of a broken leg, and sundry other cuts and wounds, which made good progress under the kind surgeon's unremitting care.

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Little more need be said. When I grew stronger I sent to beg Mr. Delve to come to me, and told him that I had made a discovery which would, in a year or so, treble the value of the Greystone Colliery.

But I stipulated that nothing of this must be told to Bumpas.

"Oh! that's impossible," was the answer. "I know why you dislike him; so do I. But he's our manager, and in this case we shall know to whom the credit is due."

"As you like," was my firm reply; "but in that event I resign my appointment, that is all."

Then I proceeded to lay before him the proofs I had industriously accumulated of a conspiracy between Bumpas, the bailiffs, the engineman, and some others, by which they had been robbing their masters of, from two to three hundred dollars per week.

Their mode of operating had been to enter on the pay sheets the names of men who had no existence, and then divide among themselves the unearned wages; clearly, as one after another had detected what was going on, they had been bribed into silence, till (as Figgis had b asted) they were all of them as safe in their well-paid positions as the head of the firm—so long as Bumpas was manager.

His share of the plunder had been something like $5,000 a year. No wonder the firm didn't prosper.

As soon as I was able to be about we had the whole gang (except one who saved himself by giving evidence, and Bumpas, who contrived to get away to Spain just in time) comfortably ensconced in gaol.

I was entrusted with the development of the precious Nine-foot Coal, which proved a huge success; and now I have a handsome salary as general manager, and a small share in the business, which will make my fortune some day.

What is more, I am married to Amy Bell, and we both agree that next to one another, we love no one more than Toby, the sagacious terrier, who enjoys full credit for all this good luck, which enables me to look back without the least regret to that day when I went through my perilous adventure.

A Cruel Hoax.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

LAST summer, passing through Dieppe on my return to England, I came across Jules Dalacour, whom I had lost sight of for some years, and who, like myself, was staying at the Hotel Royal. We dined together, and spent our evenings at the establissement, smoking and chatting of old times, and recalling to each other's memory more than one acquaintance of our younger days, often wondering what had become of them.

"You remember Cadol," I happened to say, "the banker of the Rue du Hedor?"

"Remember him!" echoed Dalacour, turning suddenly pale and speaking hoarsely, as it under the influence of some strong emotion: "I am not likely to forget him, connected as he was with one of the saddest circumstances of my life. You look surprised," he continued, but if you knew all, you would understand how painfully the mere mention of his name affects me."

'Let us talk of something else," I suggested, an xious to divert his thoughts from a subject evidently distasteful to him.

"No," he replied, "it would be hardly fair to excite your curiosity without satisfying it, which I can do without scruple, as neither the individal in question nor the other principal party concerned are now living. Only, if you care to hear my story, I warn you beforehand that it is not a pleasant one:

"Some fifteen years ago," went on Dalacour, "I was invited to a dinner given by the chief promoter of a newly-started financial speculation, Cadol—with whom I had a slight acquaintance—being among the guests. As we adjourned into the smoking room he came up to me, and inquired in a low voice if I knew the man I had been conversing with an instant before.

"'Which?' I asked, for I had spoken to several.

"'The tall one,' he replied, with a dark moustache and a stoop in the right shoulder."

"'You mean Mallet. Certainly I know him very well.'

"'In that case,' said Cadol, 'if you take my advice, the less you see of him the better.'

"'Why?'

"I had rather not say; but you may rely on what I tell you. "'You have already said too much or not enough,' I retorted. 'I have known Mallet a long time, and we play piquet together every afternoon at the Cafe des Varietes. Why should I drop his acquaintance? Is there anything against him?'

"'That depends,' dryly replied Cadol, 'on the way people look at it; but if you really wish to know——'

"'I not only wish, but insist upon it.'

"'Well, then,' he resumed after glancing cautiously round to make sure that no one was within hearing, 'listen;' and bending his face close to mine he whispered a few words in my ear which made me start with amazement.

"'Impossible!' I exclaimed.

"'But nevertheless true.'

"'I cannot believe it. Are you certain that you have not been misinformed?'

"'Positively certain. I have it direct from the Prefecture—an unquestionable authority, you will allow—and thought it only right to put you on your guard. Forewarned, forearmed, you know.'

"'I am obliged to you,' I replied, 'but I would have given a great deal not to have heard it. What on earth am I to do.'

"'That is your affair—not mine. It was my duty to warn you, and I have done so. Adieu;' and with a significant nod he rejoined the other guests, leaving me to meditate on the disagreeable position in which his mysterious disclosure had unfortunately placed me.

"One thing was clear: I must at once break off all intimacy with Mallet—no easy task, as I had foreseen. I had hardly entered the cafe on the following afternoon, when he accosted me smilingly as usual, with outstretched hand. I kept mine behind my back, and pretended not to see him. He looked surprised, but said nothing. Presently he came up again. 'Shall we have our game?' he asked.

"I replied curt y in the negative.

"'You are very laconic to-day,' he remarked. 'What is the matter?'

"'Nothing,' I said moving to the door.

"'If you are disposed for a stroll I will accompany you.'

"'I am not going your way.'

"He bit his lips, and after a moment's pause shrugged his shoulders, and left me without another word.

"Mallet, however, was not a man to submit quietly to so markeg a disinclination on my part for any further intercourse with him. I did my best to avoid him, and had never set foot in the Cafe des Varietes since our recent interview, but I felt convinced that sooner or later he would demand an explanation; and I was not mistaken. One morning, while crossing the garden of the Palais Royal, I found myself face to face with him. Retreat was impossible, and I perceived from his resolute air that he was determined to bring matters to a crisis. As I expected, he began by reproaching me for my inexplicable change of conduct towards him, alleging that he had the right to know the reason.

"'You ought to know it without asking,' I answered, looking him full in the face.

"'If I knew,' he retorted, 'I should not need to ask; but how I can have possibly offended you passes my comprehension entirely.'

"'Knowing what I did, his audacity confounded me.

"'Enough, Monsieur Mallet,' I said; 'it is useless to prolong this discussion. Henceforth our ways lie apart, and we are strangers to each other.'

"'But why?' he persisted, laying his hand on my arm.

"I shook it off indignantly.

"'I have nothing more to say to you,' was my contemptuous reply. Our acquaintance ends here.'

"He stared at me for a moment, then changing his tone, 'As you will,' he said, 'and dont fancy I regret it, for of all the cantankerous fellows I ever met with, not one of them can hold a candle to you.'

"The more I reflected on the secret confided to me by Cadol, the more I congratulated myself on my escape from so compromising a position; and as time went on had almost forgotten the existence of Mallet, when a circumstance occurred which recalled him to my memory, and rendered my interference in a very delicate affair not a matter of choice, but of absolute necessity. Information had reached me that a marriage was on the point of taking place between him and the daughter of a gentleman well known in the financial world, whom I had occasionally met in society, and whose reputation as a man of honor was unimpeachable.

"Evidently neither he nor any of his family were aware of the fact which had come to my knowledge, and I alone—for Cadol had been for some months in Algiers on account of ill-health—was able to enlighten them as to the character of the intended son-in-law!

"Could I hesitate? Certainly not. I therefore wrote to the mother of the young lady, requesting an interview, and on her promise of secrecy laid the whole state of the case before her. Naturally horrified at the disclosure, she nevertheless thanked me warmly, and before twenty-four hours had elapsed I had the satisfaction of hearing that the match was broken off.

"How Mallet discovered that he owed his rejection to me I know not, but a day or two later he came to my room, accompanied by two persons, both strangers to me. He was greatly agitated, and his whole frame trembled with suppressed passion as he planted himself directly before the chair from which I had just risen.

"'By some abominable means,' he said, 'you have contrived to ruin my prospects and prevent the accomplishment of a marriage which would have insured the happiness of my life. I wish it to be distinctly understood, in presence of these gentlemen, that I consider you the most infamous scoundrel on the face of the earth, and I demand satisfaction for the cruel wrong you have done me.'

"My blood boiled at the insult, but I restrained myself by a strong effort and replied as calmly as I could:

"'You ought to be aware that no one who has a respect for his own dignity can possibly accept a challenge from you.'

"He looked at me for an instant, as if uncertain whether he had heard aright, then with a cry of fury rushed forward and seized me by the throat.

"With difficulty his friends succeeded in separating us, and dragged him out of the room, foaming with rage and shaking his fist menacingly at me.

"Presently one of them returned, and intimating that I should hear from them on the following day retired, evidently at a loss to account for the unexpected result of the interview.

"A few hours after their departure I received a telegram announcing the dangerous illness of a near relative, and obliging me to start immediately for Normandy.

"Nothing would have induced me to leave Mallet, but I had no alternative but to leave a letter for his seconds, confidentially explaining my reasons for refusing. Whether they communicated its contents to their principal or not I never knew.

"For some weeks I heard nothing further of Mallet, but was subsequently told that the state of exasperation into which the breaking off his marriage had thrown him had brought on a brain fever, from which he slowly recovered, but was never the same man again.

"He had become, I learnt, a confirmed hypochondriac, avoiding the society of his friends, and brooding over his disappointment in solitude—a complete wreck, both mental and bodily.

"Long afterwards I ascertained that he had suddenly left Paris, and embarked at Havre for New York, almost immediately on his arrival in which city he was seized with paralysis and died in a hospital.

"It may have been about a year later that I happened to meet Dulac, the homœopathic doctor, who stopped me and asked me if I had heard that Cadol was dead, it was supposed, of heart disease. Although I had seen very little of him, he had always appeared to me an agreeable and cultivated man, and I said as much.

"'Yes,' replied Dulac, 'he was a pleasant follow enough, barring his deplorable mania.'

"'What mania?' I inquired.

"'A most unfortunate one for those who suffered by it,' said the doctor gravely. 'Whenever he took a dislike to any one, whether he knew him or not, he invariably selected a third person as his confident, and imparted to him mysteriously that the individual in question was neither more nor less than a police spy.'

"'A police spy!'—the very words that Cadol had used with reference to Mallet. The recollection flashed upon me in an instant, and it was with a horrible foreboding that I stammered out, 'And the charge was not true?'

"'Not a syllable of it.'

"You may imagine the effect produced upon me by this terrible revelation. I had unconsciously served the purpose of an unscrupulous calumniator, and, led astray by my own credulity, had succeeded only too well in wrecking the life of one whom I now know to be an innocent man. I strove, as you may believe, to atone for the wrong I had involuntarily done him. I inquired after the family whose alliance he had sought, but they too had quitted France, and all my efforts to trace them were unavailing. Of the few others who still remember Mallet, none—save the two strangers present at our last meeting—are acquainted with the secret, and the recollection of that painful scene has doubtless long since faded from their memory. Would that it could from mine!"

CLEVER MEN'S TOOLS.—It is not tools that make the workman, but the trained skill and determination of the man himself. Indeed, it is an old saying that "a bad workman never yet had a good tool," and the truth of this adage is simply shown by the following facts:

Ferguson made wonderful things, such as his wooden clock that accurately measured the hours, by means of a common pocket-knife—a tool in everybody's hand, but then everybody is not a Ferguson.

A pan of water and two thermometers were the tools by which Dr. Black discovered latent heat; and a prism, a lens, and a sheet of pasteboard enabled Newton to unfold the composition of light and the origin of color. Some one asked Opie by what wonderful process he mixed his colors. His reply was, "I mix them with my brains, sir."

An eminent foreign savant called upon Dr. Wollaston, and requested to be shown over his laboratories, in which science had been enriched by so many important discoveries, when the doctor took him into a little study, and, pointing to an old tea-tray on the table, containing a few watch glasses, test papers, a small balance, and a blow-pipe, said:

"There is all the laboratory I have!" Stothard learned the art of combining colors by closely studying butterflies' wings; he would often say that no one knew what he owed to these tiny insects. A burnt stick and a barn door served Wilkie in lieu of pencil and canvas. Bewick first practised drawing on the cottage walls of his native village, which he covered with his sketches in chalk; and Benjamin West made his first brushes out of the cat's tail. Franklin first robbed the thunder-cloud of its lightning by means of a kite made with two cross sticks and a silk handkerchief. Watt made his first model of the condensing steam engine out of an anatomist's old syringe. Gifford worked his first problem in mathematics, when a cobbler's apprentice, upon small scraps of leather, which he beat smooth for the purpose, whilst Ritten house, the astronomer, first calculated eclipses on his plough handle.

TRAVELLING IN RUSSIA.—The Russians are the best coachmen in the world. In order to acquire the great skill in driving to which they attain, they begin their training early—in fact, when they are quite children. It is wonderful to see the boy-coachman driving a carriage and four over a rough and dangerous road at full gallop for ten or twelve miles at a stretch. Russia, as all know, is of vast extent containing, as some estimate, 7,000,000 square miles. The ordinary carriage roads are nearly the only means of communication; but these are of very inferior construction. Huge hollows and large stones continually intercept the traveller's progress; frail bridges of wood, without any battlements or infinite number of whatever, stretch across wide and rapid rivers. Over the dangerous roads and still more dangerous rivers the Russian continues dashing at the fastest gallop. It seems a miracle that travellers do not, as a rule, lose their lives, and break their limbs and bodies every journey. The latter often takes place, the coach being stopped for repairs sometimes half a dozen times on the road.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Quite the newest things in the way of fur boas for the ladies are long tails, or rather pieces of fur, clasped on one side of the dress bodice by a large head of some wild beast, which causes the wearer to look as if she were in the power of some savage animal, and has, to my eyes, anything but a pleasant effect. The fur is very wide and fluffy, and I hear that this arrangement has caused quite a furore among the Paris ladies, who have discarded the long boas so much in favor last winter for these latest departures in fashion's freaks.

A novel dental operation—that of transplanting teeth into artificial sockets—is said to have been successfully performed in New York some days ago, in the presence of several dentists, and two subjects were present to demonstrate that a firm growth follows. As described, by this process a hole is bored in the bone under the gum where it is desired that the new tooth shall take root, and in this the tooth is put and fastened with ligatures. The ligatures, in the case of one of the patients, were removed in the presence of the dentists, and the tooth which had been put in previously, was found to have taken firm root.

The Tyrolese are going to have the highest observatory on record. The advantages of regular accounts of what goes on a few thousand feet above us have long been recognized by meteorologists. The difficulty is how to get them; and the nature of the chief obstacles may be gathered from the description of the kind of quarters in process of construction for the new hermit of Sonnblick. He has to dwell in a log house on ordinary days, as in a stone house he would probably be frozen to death. But although his wooden habitation is constructed as solidly and strongly as possible, and anchored to the rock by steel wire ropes, it is anticipated that on a stormy night the whole structure may slip its cables and cruise off bodily into the valley.

A Paris correspondent writes: "The French, who, as a rule, have few children, generally make the most of those they possess. There is, consequently, no greater despot on the face of the earth than the juvenile household satrap of Gallic birth, who kicks and shrieks from morning to night. People who regulate the fashions here are not so slow to take advantage of the vast importance of the domestic tyrants who are dressed up in the most gorgeous and artistically designed habiliments when they should be still in swaddling clothes. It is now the fashion to put Mlle. Baby not only in morning and evening dress, but also in sumptuous garments when she first goes out. Babies attired in "trousers" style frequently look greater frights than the puny infants of the Parisian poor, covered with their little skull caps, and wrapped up like undersized Egyptian mummies, as if for transmission abroad.

According to a recent work, the credit of discovering that infectious diseases are due to germs belongs, not to M. Pasteur or any of his contemporaries, but to a physician who died at Lyons more than a century and a half ago. His work on the "Origin of the Plague" was published in 1721. It created considerable stir at the time, both in his own native town, where he was famous for his practical skill, and abroad. The French schools of medicine, however, ignored him. He writes: "Minute insects or worms alone can explain these diseases. It is true they are not visible; but it does not therefore follow that they are nonexistent. It is only that our microscopes are not at present powerful enough to show them. If we admit the existence of minute living creatures, we understand how infection can be conveyed in a latent condition from one place to break out afresh in another." On the whole it must be confessed that few people could give a better account of the germ theory nowadays.

An excellent memory is often found in persons of very little mind, sometimes in persons of almost no mind at all. Black Tom, the noted pianist, is an example. Nearly imbecile in intellect, he can remember every piece of music he has once played, and can reproduce it on the instrument at any time without notes. Instances of remarkable memory are not uncommon among members of the colored race who have very limited understanding. William Wilhite, generally known as Blind Bill, a negro inmate of the Atlanta, Georgia, poorhouse (he was made blind by the enlargement, in boyhood, of his forehead, which nearly covers his eyes), can tell, without a single mistake, the name, day of arrival, the cause of death, the age and antecedents of every person who has been an inmate of the house since he went there, twelve years ago. He knows the name of every street in Atlanta, and can go anywhere with the assistance of the cane he always carries. Nothing that he has ever been told escapes his recollection; he can repeat it years after word for word. He seems to have memory in his fingers. He knows any one, whose hand he has once taken, by taking it again, even when ten years have passed. He recognizes men by a bark, a mew, a roar, the shape of the fingers, the tones in the palm, or some other peculiarity, his sense of touch being most delicate and distinctly developed. Yet, outside of this gift he has no intelligence, and is far below the average of negroes who have been freed by slavery. Memory, which is usually an attribute of eminent men, would seem often to be an attribute of idiots.

Our Young Folks.

A SEARCH FOR THE POLE.

BY T. L. J.

"TAKE me Hugh, take me."

"No, no, Dandy Bettie; we don't want any little ones where we're going."

Dandy Bettie was a fair, fluffy-haired damsel of four—a sweet, blue-eyed, waif of a hot-house flower, come down from the city to tarry awhile among her cousins in the country, to gain some of their strength and vigor.

Hugh was her big, stalwart cousin of ten, almost a giant compared with the little lady whose company he was rejecting in such ungentlemanly fashion.

"I'm not Dandy Bettie—you know I'm not; and I'm not even Bettie; mamma calls me Betsy, and so does auntie," lisped the small tongue, stumbling over the name till it sounded very much like that to which she objected.

"Well, that's what I said, Bettie," cried prov king Hugh, snapping his fingers at her, standing at the nursery door, as they all went rollicking away, and down the stairs, Hugh, Rosie, Jack and Will.

But "take me, take me," was what the little pleader, staying by the landing as the lad halted on the topmost stair.

"No, no; Jack Snow would swallow up a chit of a girl like you."

"I'm not a chit; I'm over so big," said small Bettie to this. "And where are you going?"

"Up to the North Pole, perhaps."

Ah, Hugh, why not keep to the simple truth?

"And where is that?"

"Oh, a rare jolly place, where 'tis said they put up the old moons and make stars of them."

"Then take me, Hugh, take me."

"Nonsense! stay and talk to Tibbie."

Ah! well, they were gone—kindly, boyish, unthinking Hugo, Bettie's favorite, and all; romping out into the white, snowy world.

This was what they were bent on doing—making a monster snowball, which should astonish all the simple grown-up folk, who somewhat slighted snowy weather, with its attendant unpleasantness.

"Oh, I wish I could go to the North Pole!" sighed little lonely Bettie, going back to the silent nursery. No even nurse was there, for she was below stairs somewhere. Tibbie was there, and told her wee mistress as well as she could, that she would like some milk.

So down toddled the kind-hearted little soul, to the kitchen, and fetched her a cupful, all by herself, as she told Mistress Pussy, and then that North Pole scheme came back again.

"Cutting up old moons into stars—and, oh! I should like a pretty star, all my own, to hold in my hand, and I'm sure they'd give me one." Who they were was very vague in the child's mind, but soon her scraps of thought took shape and form—"and I'll go," quoth she to pussy, sitting purring by her side. "I'll go all by myself, and if they give me a pretty, wee, twinkling star, you shall wear it, Tibbie, when you're good, hung round your neck; and now I'll go."

Trip-trot—a sweet little sunbeam, she stole down the stairs, and out in the snowy world and the rest of room sunlight.

And while she tripped and mused out her thoughts, the monster snowball grew apace, for many hands make light work, and merrily and quickly goes play-work, all the world over.

"I say," quoth Jack to Hugh, as the moments flew by like fleeting notes of pleasure, "I do believe there's Dandy Bettie out there, toiling along like a little brick."

"Nonsense!" said Hugh, shading his eyes with his hands, to peer in the direction to which the other pointed; "no, it can't be she—they'd not let her out alone; it must be some other little chit of a girl; no, it can't be she."

"Oh! I do fink there's Hugh and all of them down there," soliloquised Bettie, espying the busy group from afar; "but no, it can't be they, for they're not making stars—no, what are they doing?" Ah! Bettie, well if you had gone to see.

But no, the sweet, golden lights of sunset lured her on, reflecting on before, "as if they were making stars there," so she said, when that had happened which could not be recalled.

"Well, little maiden, where are you bound for?" asked a gruff voice at her side, a dark face spying down at her, a tall man's figure casting a shadow by the side of her dainty one.

"I ain't bound," objected Bettie, a little quiver of fear in her voice; "I'm going to the North Pole."

"Ah! a jolly place that," observed the man, stalking beside her.

"That's what Hugh said, and I fink 'tis, 'cause they make stars there," lisped the silvery tongue of the child.

"Well, and what then?" questioned the man.

"When I get there, I'll ask them to give me a star to hang round Tibbie's neck."

"Ah! when you gets there."

"Is it far?" lisped Bettie, her childish ear detecting a something in the man's tone she hardly liked.

"No, not far, and I'm going the same way."

"Then will you take me? Then, when I've got my star, Hugh wouldn't mind—or is there, you know, and Rosie, and Jack, and Will—Hugh'd not mind bringing me back."

"Yes, he'd bring you back, and I'll take you there." With this the man clasped the child's hand in his, and they trudged on together. And there was a cart coming along the same way.

"Do you know Hugh?" questioned Bettie.

"No I can't say as I do."

"He's my cousin, and big, over so big, and—don't you like me?" quavered the pleading little voice. Ah! what did the innocent blue eyes on the child read in those dark ones peering down at her?

"Oh, yes; I think you're a nice little girl."

How the little reluctant hand tried to withdraw itself from the grasp of the other!

"No, no, dear; you're going to the North Pole, ye know, to get a star—here, let me carry you."

Up he took the small, dainty mite, who quivered very like some poor captive bird in a strange hand, not knowing whether it is in the clutches of friend or foe.

"I'm not your little girl," lisped she, right bravely in her fright. "I'm mamma's and auntie's."

"Yes, mamma's and auntie's little girl, going to the North Pole along o' me;" and now the lumbering cart came stealing up over the snowy ground.

"Silly!" called the man, and then out came a woman's head therefrom.

"Here's a little girl going to the North Pole, and I'm going to take her there; have her in along of you."

"No, no; I don't want to, while, I want to walk all by myself," was all the protest poor Bettie could make.

She clung to the man in her fear, not because she trusted him, no because—because—ah! she was within the covered cart, where sat two little boys, who grinned at her almost from ear to ear.

The woman bade her hush her long, shrill cries in a tone which made her cower down, like some small animal caught in a trap.

Meanwhile, the cart jogged away over the snowy road among the red sunbeams.

The snowball had grown to its monster dimensions, and now came the mighty deed of rolling it; this they did to the impromptu chorus,

"Push on, push up, roll away;
Home comes to another snowy day,"

the echo thereof straying away, to mingle with the rumble of the cart, along the snowy road. Ah! the day's triumphs were over, so they left their mighty trophy behind—all those rollicking boys and girls, and went trooping home.

"Where is Bettie?" asked mamma, meeting her party in the hall.

"We don't know, we haven't got her, mamma," spoke Hugh, who was always looked upon as her guardian.

"She is not at home," was the startling reply.

"Then that was her I saw," cried Jack, to much in earnest to think about his grammar.

"Yes," quoth Hugh, now in the grip of conscience, and away started the lads to find her.

The boys knew where they had seen her, like a little dot among the sunshine, and they were soon there, rushing along the road, where the track of the cart still lay. Their companions joined them as they passed through the village.

There, what was that, on in front? A cart—on they went, like the wind.

"Master, have you seen a little girl in your way?" asked Hugh of him who drove.

"No, little girls ain't in my way," and he whipped up his horse to a trot.

"Yes, he's seen me, Hugh. Hugh! Hugh!" cried a strained little voice from within the cart. And the boys heard.

"Why, you've got her yourself!" said Hugh.

"I've got no little girl; get out of my way, or I'll flog and drive over the whole lot of yer," was the retort, as they clustered round the horse and cart like bees.

"I'll not get out," spoke staunch Hugh. "Bettie, scream again." But no; there was no response—not even a sob. "Well, we'll follow you to town and have the cart searched," threatened Hugh, strong in numbers, if not in strong physical force; and so they did, like a body-guard alongside the rumbling cart.

But not to town, though; the man knew better than to play the game out; he gave the child up to the clamoring band, among the falling shadows, and drove off, glad to be free of them.

"Hugh, my boy," said mamma, after Bettie had been in bed a week with a cold, from getting her feet wet in the snow, "when you deceive or slight children, is it not like setting aside a command of Him who was once a Boy among them, and who said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones?" "

SOMETHING IN A NAME.

The most prevalent names in Scotland, are Smith, the name of one person in every sixty-nine; MacDonald, one in seventy-eight; Brown, one in eighty-nine; Robertson, one in ninety one; Campbell one in ninety-two; Thompson, one in ninety-five, and Stewart, one in ninety-eight. One person in every twelve in Scotland, will answer to one or other of these seven names.

The Smiths in England and Wales are calculated to be about one in every seventy three of the population. If we take the three common names of Smith, Jones and Williams, one person in every twenty-eight will answer to one or other of them.

Life, with a good number, is a struggle at the best, and the success that attends us is influenced more than people sometimes think by the names we bear.

Even the sound of a name is of consequence. Some names, indeed, are almost fatal to success; they simply suggest jokes and encourage familiarity.

A man has no hesitation in proving "by thumps upon your back how he esteems your merit" if you are called Twigger, or Tapp, or Trundle, or Littleboy, but he would hardly venture on it were you a more aristocratic Montgomery or a Gascoigne.

For a man to inherit an absurd or insignificant name is to have a stone tied around his neck in childhood to keep him all his life in the depths of obscurity.

It would be difficult to find a famous character in literature, art, or anything else with a surname the least approaching in character to, say, Toothaches, or Bang, or Baby.

Who could fancy a Squib or a Gabble visited at any time by the inspirations of genius? John Wilkes expressed this idea once in conversation with Dr. Johnson. They were speaking of Elkanah Settle, the last of the cycle poets.

"There is something in names," said Wilkes, "which one cannot help feeling. Now Elkanah Settle's so queer; who can expect much from that name? We should have no hesitation to give it for John Dryden in preference to Elkanah Settle from the names only, without knowing their different merits."

Considerations such as these—not to speak of testamentary injunctions and conditions attached to deeds of entail—have induced people from time to time to change their names.

Cuthbert is made to take the place of Cuddy, McAlpine of Halfpenny, Belcome of Bullock; De Winton of Wilkins and Ephraim Bug is transformed into the aristocratic Norfolk Howard.

GOLD AND GLITTER.

BY L. F.

A CAT and her kittens came tumbling in," so says the song, and it moreover adds that when they came tumbling in, in a rowley-powley manner, they disturbed a little party that they found assembled, consisting of a frog, a rat, and a little mouse.

But to-day there was no rat for the cat and no mouse for the kittens, and yet they came tumbling in, in the same boisterous style—the cat being no less excited than the kittens.

Yet there was to be no rat or mouse hunt, for rats and mice never put in their appearances in the well-furnished dining-room into which Mrs. Moulder and her family entered.

Mrs. Moulder had been sitting patiently watching the dining-room door for some time, and indulging in meditation.

"Cats," observed Mrs. Moulder to herself, "understand more than people think they do. They are an observant race, ingenious in their plans and very persevering in carrying them out. How otherwise should I elude the cook after small depredations in the larder?

"But to return to my praise of our patience.

"I have been possessed of a most interesting fact for some hours: I have watched the family go into luncheon, I have kept my eye upon the door, and when they come out, then is our time."

"Frisk and Slyboots," said she, turning to her kittens, "do not be so giddy! Make ready to follow me quietly as soon as I make a move."

"But," said Mrs. Moulder gently, "lobster salad and oyster patties do not come every day, and I can afford to be patient in prospect of such delicacies." Then she added aloud, as she saw the family leaving the dining-room: "Frisk and Slyboots, to-day is the first time you will taste lobster salad and——"

"If it isn't all eaten up," suggested Slyboots.

Such a possibility had not occurred to Mrs. Moulder, and it upset her equanimity. With one frantic bound she reached the door, Frisk and Slyboots following, and the whole three went tumbling into the room in a boisterous rowley-powley fashion, instead of the dignified entrance that Mrs. Moulder had intended.

"Cats will be cats," murmured Mrs. Moulder. "Nature is strong, and lobster is my weakness."

She flew to the table with an anxious heart. Oh, what joy! Sufficient lobster remained for a meal, and there was, besides, two oyster patties.

Slyboots and Frisk had mounted upon the back of the chair behind her.

They did not long remain in their elevated position, and, mewing with delight, they sprang upon the table, and were soon revelling among the dishes.

Meanwhile Mrs. Moulder planted herself before the lobster. She steadied herself with one paw on the table, the other extended to clutch the lobster.

She was on the point of dragging it from the dish, when a more civilized impulse seized her.

She sprang upon the damask covered chair, which brought her to a level with the table, and prepared to enjoy the dish.

"It is a pity people cannot leave well alone," mused Mrs. Moulder, sniffing at the lobster; "but, whether seasoned or not, lobster is lobster."

A second time she sniffed, and then drew back.

"It is too provoking," said she. "And yet it looks delicious."

And then Mrs. Moulder daintily dipped into the dish, took a mouthful of the salad, which she swallowed greedily.

But alas! the mustard in it was strong—so strong that Mrs. Moulder fell to the floor with a violent fit of coughing, sneezing, a great sparkling of lights before her eyes, a giddiness in her head, and a tingling in her ears.

In fact, she experienced the most horrible sensations, and was not sure if she were dead or alive.

Frisk and Slyboots, in great alarm, sprang down to see what was the matter with their mother.

"It looked so good," murmured Mrs. Moulder. "Who could have anticipated so much mustard?"

At that moment one of the servants appeared, who, seeing the mischief done to the dishes and tablecloth, which was covered with the footprints of Frisk and Slyboots traced in jelly, gravy, and custard, seized a dinner-napkin, chased Mrs. Moulder and her family from the room.

They took refuge in the garden, and when Mrs. Moulder had somewhat recovered, she said to Frisk and Slyboots—

"My children, take a lesson from my experience to-day; remember that appearances are often deceitful, and that 'all is not gold that glitters.'"

EARLY LETTER WRITING.—Two centuries before Christ the fashion of letter-writing had become generally prevalent—that was when Rome's empire had become widely extended, and when her citizens were always on the move, and sometimes were absent from home for months or years, while in the meantime their hearts were always turning to the old scenes and the old friends whom they had left behind. As might have been expected, the earliest letters were from parents to children, such as those of Cato, the censor, to his son, and Cornelia to her son Caius Gracchus

From those days to the present the practice of putting thought to paper with no other object than to let another know what the writer was doing or thinking about has gone on, and these letters were most valuable for the light which they cast upon the times in which they were written.

By far the most indefatigable and prolific letter-writer was Cicero. Nearly 800 of his letters are now extant, besides ninety letters addressed to him by his various correspondents, and this was but a fragment of the immense correspondence he left behind him.

It was difficult to imagine what our notion of Roman life and manners and history would be without this unique correspondence.

Sometimes affe ted and pedantic in his other writings, Cicero was frank in his letters; he had a craving for the sympathy of those he loved, and, in the lecturer's opinion, that would be found to be the secret of all good letter-writing.

In Cicero's letters, however, there was one abominable practice noticeable; he was always putting in little scraps of Greek words, Greek slang; in fact, his letters swarmed with it. In the same way some people nowadays never seemed to be able to get on without some scraps of French or German or Italian, which might just as well, or better, be expressed in homely English.

GOOD DISCIPLINE.—The secret of good discipline lies in adaption of forces to the nature of the child. Consideration of peculiarities must be made even in the very young children. Seldom two children can be governed in the same way; and it is the duty of parents to study their individualities, otherwise there is no discipline, but the care given aggravates evil tendencies in them.

There can be no doubt that much of the naughtiness in children is unintentionally taught or developed in them. When grown people are so far from perfect, it seems unfair that every apparent fault of the child should be made so much of, and many times what seems wrong in a child is only a natural act under the existing conditions, and if we take time to examine the matter we shall be more just.

Injustice and weakness in parents make sad havoc with children's characters. There is a strong latent force in children which we must strive to control; we can not change its nature, but by strength and patience, and thoughtfulness we may guide it.

THE IMAGINATION.—There are few more potent forces in character or in life than that of the imagination. It has, in fact, a life of its own underlying the actual and visible life, yet secretly and constantly moulding and fashioning it. It has its sins and virtues, its strength and weakness, its development and repression, all of which tell upon the desires, affect the disposition, and to some extent determine the actions of men. Whoever wishes to be the controller and director of his action must discipline his imagination. It is before the hand is stretched forth to do the unjust deed, before the lips are opened to speak the cruel word, that the sin of injustice or cruelty begins. It is the indulgence of the fancy which pictures the coveted gain and dictates the bitter word. If this be not checked and resisted, there is little hope that the evil deed will be avoided.

GEORGE SIMON, of Charlotte, Mich., was poor and smitless, and Mrs. Simon was thirty. She became disgusted with George's lack of enterprise, sued for a divorce, and after much trouble secured it a few days ago. Three days later Simon received notice that an aunt had died in France, leaving him $30,000. George says he can get along all right now, and the late Mrs. Simon is the maddest woman in Michigan.

PARTING LINES.

BY S. E. W.

Oh, fall not thou, when far away,
In foreign climes, you lonely stray,
To often think of me—
Who, when the world had proved untrue,
More fond and faithful to thee grew,
Thy guide and guard to be.

Oh, what to me is time or space,
Save that I gaze upon thy face,
Nor clasp in mine thy hand?
For though an ocean 'tween us flows,
Our thought no check or boundary knows,
But flies o'er sea and land.

Forget not all the converse sweet—
Fifteen our life but all too fleet
For that communion dear,
I doubt thee not; I know full well
That round thy soul is twined a spell
That will not languish here.

'Twas wove by one whose every thought
Was for thy weal by nothing bought
But thy returning love!
And be the influence that it gives
Enduring, writ in heaven's archives
To win thy heart above.

Warm tears are coursing down my cheek,
And thoughts the lips could never speak
Are crowding on my brain!
I have no power those tears to quell,
For my sad spirit knows full well
We shall not meet again.

Be this our ever present joy,
That bears no stain of earth's alloy,
Nor gaze of mortal eyes.
At morning's blush and eve's decline,
My fervent prayer will blend with thine,
And both together rise!

Farewell, and be it ours to greet
Each other at the Mercy-seat—
Earth's sorrows ever o'er:
And there, in climes of endless day,
With white-robed angels we shall stray,
To sunder never more.

AMONG THE CELESTIALS.

For a few days before a Chinese wedding the bride elect, who has already been told of the approaching event, gives vent to her grief in orthodox fashion by loud bellowings night and day. The weeping damsel expresses at intervals in conventional phrases the sense of desolation she feels at the near prospect of being torn for ever from her parents and her childhood's home.

The writer remembers being kept awake for hours by the wails and shrieks of a distracted virgin who was going to be married the next day. It is on this last night that the maiden tries on her bridal dress, lights incense before the shrine of her ancestors, and prostrates herself in farewell worship before her assembled parents, uncles and aunts.

At last the dreadful day arrives. The fair one rises early, bathes perhaps for the first time in two or three months, arranges her hair in matronly style, puts on her bridal garments of gorgeous red silk or stuff, sometimes richly embroidered, and heavy coronet-like head-dress brilliant with real or imitation pearls or precious stones, velvet tassels and fringes, and gold or gilt trappings, which jingle at every step she takes. Her toilet is completed by the large red veil of silk or cotton, which completely covers her face from view.

It is considered good form to resist the services of her attendants with loud screams and expostulations, any such thing as submission on her part being sure to be construed by her chaffing bridesmaids into an immodest joy at the near approach of wedlock.

The bridegroom remains at home with his friends. He is arrayed in silks and satins, embroidered according to his rank, a red scarf crosses his breast, and a brilliant wedding-cap is worn on his head. He seats himself in glorious state awaiting the coming of the bride. He has already despatched an elegant bridal sedan, richly gilded and enamelled, decorated with kingfisher's feathers and ornamented with gorgeous carvings, which he has hired for the occasion. It is carried by half a dozen men in red tunics, and follows in the rear of the procession.

In due time the procession arrives at the bride's house, and is greeted by the dismal howl of the females within. A letter written by her husband is now handed to the bride, informing her that the flowery sedan is waiting at her door, and inviting her to set out for her new home.

Then come sundry exhortations from her parents, exchange of good wishes, protracted partings, choking sobs, and vehement protestations from the bride against being taken from her home.

This hollow farce is broken up by a bridesmaid casting the veil over the face of the lugubrious bride, while an o'd hag takes her upon her back in ignominious fashion, carrying her out of the door and setting her down in the sedan-chair. The door of the conveyance is then locked and the key handed to the bridegroom's friend. The bands then strike up, and the procession returns, amidst farewell salvos of bombs and fire-crackers. Arriving at the door of her new home, she is saluted with more fire-crackers.

The bridegroom now comes forth, with all that dignified bearing and easy carelessness so natural to a well-bred Chinaman, and taps at the door of the chair with his fan. The door is then opened, and the bride, still thickly veiled from profane gaze, is again carried on the back of a female attendant into her husband's house.

She is now a wife the simple ride in the flowery chair having the mystic power of transforming her into a married woman. The bridegroom now seats himself on a high chair and receives the homage of his dutiful spouse.

He then descends, raises her heavy veil, and for the first time gazes upon the face of the girl to whom he had been engaged for the last ten or fifteen years. There follows no rapturous embrace, no word of tender endearment, no look that speaks of love. He simply inspects her for a few moments as he would some piece of furniture, for she is nothing more to him.

The wedding-feast begins in the afternoon and extends over two or three days. The banqueting-halls are lighted up with scores of prism-fringed chandeliers, tables are spread with all kind of delicacies, hundreds of invited guests, all grandly dressed, throng the room; garrulous groups surround the bridegroom, offering their congratulations; a band of music strikes up, and the bride, in her wedding robes and tasselled head dress, enters the room supported by two matrons, while she bends with speechless reverence to her husband's guests, offering them sweetmeats, wine and tea.

Men and women never feast together, and the most trying ordeal of her wedding duties comes when her husband leaves her in the gentlemen's room. She waits upon them in silence, and they in turn chaff her with coarse jests, criticize her appearance aloud, and play practical jokes upon her person, of so cruel a character that, if she emerges from the room unscalded or unscarred, she may consider herself lucky.

She must submit to all this ribaldry and persecution with a calm, placid, unmurmuring demeanor, and any show of either resentment or mirth would be remembered to her discredit for years to come. When the guests have departed she may retire.

M. S.

Grains of Gold.

Beautiful thoughts are the flowers of the mind.

It is only right service which is perfect freedom.

A good way to make children tell the truth is to tell it yourself.

It is only once in a life that the average man loves his neighbor as himself.

Good deeds in this life are coals raked up in embers, to make a fire next day.

Recreation is but an aside in life. Employment is the source and means of content.

The joy of the spirit indicates its strength. All healthy things are sweet-tempered.

Purposes, like eggs, unless they be hatched into actions, will run into rottenness.

Dost thou love life? Then waste not time, for time is the stuff that life is made of.

When a man wants to find fault he will do so if he has to spend all his time looking for it.

A wise man's heart is like a broad hearth that keeps the coals (his passions) from burning the house.

It is a good thing to laugh, at any rate; and if a straw can tickle a man, it is an instrument of happiness.

In studying character, do not be blind to the shortcomings of a warm friend or the virtues of a bitter enemy.

Never in our estimate of human nature and human society should we forget the good which courts no public observation.

Not uttering what is false or doubtful is but a small part of real truthfulness; deceit may consist in concealing what ought to be spoken, in exaggerating or diminishing with a purpose.

Philosophers have done wisely when they told us to cultivate our reason rather than our feelings, for reason reconciles us to the daily things of existence; our feelings teach us to yearn after the far, the difficult, the unseen.

Femininities.

Tin cleaned with paper will shine better than when cleaned with flannel.

Two young ladies, students of the State College, Maine, have been suspended for hazing.

The sphere of our affections is one in which we are very apt to expect too much from others.

Madison, Florida, is said to have a first-rate cow-doctor who is also a fine-looking young lady.

In the imperial State crown of Britain there are 1363 brilliant, 1273 rose, and 147 table diamonds.

Various shades of green are respectively called lizard, serpent, frog, moss and cabbage green this season.

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can get your mother to do to-day," a lazy fashionable young lady was heard to say recently.

Parisians have tired of bric-a-brac indiscriminately scattered about their dining and drawing-rooms, and a reaction is about to set in.

It is waste of thought to envy a richer neighbor. You cannot know her inner life, and her lot is not more enviable than yours unless she is loved more.

It is very difficult for a lady to enter or leave a carriage properly. It requires practice and a carriage. The carriage is the hardest thing to acquire.

There are some women who wouldn't be happy in a mansion in Heaven unless they could clean house about once in every three or four months.

Every piano should have a waterproof covering. If this cover is kept on while the young lady amateur is about, the instrument will last a very long time.

"So you are to be married?" questioned a cynical young man. "Yes, very soon." "Of course you think her an angel?" "Oh, no; I have four sisters!"

Don't be too sure that you know more about the natural traits of your boys than their father does. He knows himself better than you do—or ever will.

The smaller the room, the lighter should be the furniture and the decoration of the wall. A large room should have heavy furniture and the walls may be dark.

The newest buttons are large balls of wood highly polished and showing the grain. Beans and seeds are employed as buttons. Etched ivory buttons show fine designs.

The oldest old maid in the world, a woman named Benoite, has been discovered at Auch, in France. She is 109 years old, born the year before our declaration of independence.

A noted lecturess says there isn't a man on earth she'd implicitly trust. Experience is a good teacher but we feel sorry for her, after all. She ought to have sued 'em for breach of promise.

A strong-minded woman was heard to remark the other day that she would marry a man who had plenty of money, though he was so ugly she had to scream every time she looked at him.

Everything in nature grows either healthily or unhealthily; and character is no exception. It is either expanding into new and more lovely forms, or it is toughening and hardening into deformity.

Love is the precious loom whose enchanting shuttle weaves all the tangled threads of life into that exquisite lace of witchery which makes perfect and complete the glorious fabric of rapture and delight.

Mighty is the force of motherhood. It transforms all things by its vital heat; it turns timidity into fierce courage, and dreadless defiance into tremulous submission; it turns thoughtlessness into foresight.

Parisian dolls are now constructed after the model of famous actresses. Sarah Bernhardt, Mary Anderson and other theatrical celebrities appear faithfully represented in the wax playthings this season.

Indian belles of Alaska wear a thick coating of oil and soot on their faces when not in full toilet. This is said to preserve the complexion, which, after a thorough scrubbing, looks as fair and smooth as a good article of soft soap.

The new bonnets displayed in a millinery store, which a People's party procession in Tacoma, Washington Territory, passed, demoralized a number of women who were in the line and broke up that end of the procession.

Baby baskets are shell-shaped, resembling the sleighs of a century or so ago. They are lined with blue, pink or maize, covered with lace, and are furnished with all the paraphernalia required for the wee one's toilet.

A suit for 10 cents damages has been successfully passed before Judge Lawrence by Francis Loomis, of North Adams, Mass., against W. W. Gallup, a neighbor, who cut Mrs. Loomis' clothes line from a division fence, and Gallup has appealed the case to the Supreme Court.

It has already been so cold in Dakota that a man couldn't go buggy riding with a widow and keep his arm around her fifteen minutes without getting his fingers frost-bitten. Eight months of the year is dead against Dakota women, and that is why so many single females return East.

Beaconsfield, one time premier of England, has recently been quoted as an authority on evening dress. This is what he says on the subject; "Evening dress is a style of costume sanctioned by society for enabling ladies to display their natural beauties with a profusion worthy of a Grecian statue."

The best preparation for the hands at night is white of egg, with a grain of alum dissolved in it. "Roman toilet paste" is merely white of egg, barley flour and honey. They say it was used by the Romans in olden time. Anyway, it is a first-rate thing; but it is mean, sticky sort of stuff to use, and don't do the work any better than oatmeal.

Masculinities.

A man constantly looking for good in the world is less apt to find evil.

If you want enemies, excel others; if you want friends, let others excel you.

No man should try to make himself heard in the world by dressing loudly.

A single sale of wheat in California, lately, involved a payment of $275,000.

One pair of rubbers costs less than three porous plasters and are a great deal more comfortable.

When a hoodlum politician gets distressingly hard-up he starts a bar-room raffle for a poor widow.

The man who published a book entitled "The Art of Living a Hundred Years" is dead at the age of 38.

In a recent sermon Henry Ward Beecher said: "I have no sympathy with eight-hour men who have fourteen-hour wives."

Sick wife: "If I die, John, you will never marry again, will you?" John, with unnecessary earnestness: "No, indeed!"

When a man has nothing in the world to lose, he is then in the best condition to sacrifice for the public good everything that is his.

A certain man says there is no excuse for a woman speaking crossly, as she doesn't have to answer the door bell when she is shaving.

In bundling up for a cold walk consult the thermometer, not the mirror. An unbecoming horse-blanket is better than a wooden overcoat.

Men will argue sometimes that they have no time to be polite, forgetting that it takes the same amount of time to be uncivil and disagreeable.

A Transatlantic physician has given frozen milk to patients whose stomachs did not tolerate ice cream, and speaks highly of its use in fevers.

Be careful not to interrupt another man when he is speaking; hear him out, and you will understand him better, and be able to give him a better answer.

From Sacramento comes the story of a bride won at a game of poker between her two admirers, she willing, and the loser to act as best man at the wedding.

He is the greatest man who chooses the right with invincible resolution, who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully, and whose reliance on truth and virtue is the most unfaltering.

A lawyer's clerical error in the transfer of a piece of property in Kansas City, which, in 1884, was sold for $850, has led to a lawsuit over the possession of the land, now valued at $200,000.

The Sedalia, Mo., woman who remained in bed for nine years because she got mad and said she'd "never get up, no never!" has taught all husbands a needed lesson. Build the fire yourself on a cold morning.

Angel child: "Say, have you found him yet?" Miss Anteak, on a visit. "Found whom, my little man?" Angel child: "Your husband; ma says you are a husband-hunter." The entente cordiale is now in bad repair.

A Cedar Springs, Mich., young man called on a young woman the other evening and fell asleep in his chair with one arm around her waist. When he awoke he found he was embracing a churn instead of the girl.

We believe in electing women to public office, and are glad to see that voters generally are willing to accord that privilege to the weaker sex. But we notice that they generally get the office that has no salary attached.

"Quit!" was the prescription received by return mail for the 50 cents inclosed by a man in Creston, Iowa, to an advertiser who guaranteed to cure drunkenness. Faithfully followed, it would prove an efficacious one, too.

The fact is, that, while most women like to be as well dressed as their means will permit, they would save enough out of the "waste" of a bachelor's income to clothe themselves neatly and keep a good table into the bargain.

There are a good many queer people in this world. Just at present Baltimore contains as odd a personage as Charles Dickens' Mr. Dick. He is a bookkeeper who runs his house by rules, which he has printed and hung to the rooms and halls.

Warnings are given in London papers against a man who rides in cars of the Metropolitan Railway, and part of whose description is that he carries an "apparently lacerated hand" in a sling. With his real hand beneath a cape he relieves passengers of their purses, etc.

Labor was despised by the most illustrious of ancient philosophers; but Christianity elevated, honored and sanctified it. Jesus Christ, the true son of God, submitted himself to a poor artisan of Galilee, and in the carpenter's shop of Nazareth did not disdain to set His blessed hand to labor.

Marriage is often said to be a lottery, but it was actually so in the case of Mrs. Henrietta Colver, who died recently in Northampton county, Pa., In accordance with an old Moravian custom, her husband was selected for her by lot among the brethren of suitable years, and they lived happily together for 52 years.

A woman who procured her release from a lunatic asylum in Cleveland, Ohio, the other day, has entered suits for a divorce from her husband and for $25,000 damages against the doctor on whose certificate she was committed, claiming that the affair was simply a conspiracy between the two of them to get rid of her.

Manly M. Gillam, Esq., for several years managing editor of the Philadelphia "Record," one of the leading daily papers of the country, has accepted the position of advertising manager with the great house of John Wanamaker & Co., of this city. Mr. Wanamaker is probably the most original and one of the largest, if not the largest, advertiser in the world. Advertising has now risen to the dignity of an art, and Mr. Gillam's wide newspaper experience and general ability will have abundant scope in his new field of labor.

Recent Book Issues.

"Pure Gold," by Mrs. H. L. Cameron, is not so good as the majority of works she has written. There is evidence of hurry in its pages, with a consequent slighting of its subject or plot, which, by the way, while aiming at striking originality, gives us what neither has that quality or any other that is particularly pleasant. For sale by Lippincott.

"A Modern Telemachus" is by Charlotte M. Yonge, and may be read with equal pleasure by young and old. As in the case of its model, the ancient Telemachus, there is a great deal of wandering and adventure, mixed with useful truth. The story is based upon fact, and in its course it gives so much in the way of fresh reading out of the common course, so many pictures of people, places and events, that with less pretence of teaching good in the guise of fiction than its prototype, it does that work no injustice in borrowing the name of its hero, and general plan of its management. All will be interested in "A Modern Telemachus," for it is just such a serving of good ingredients as furnishes all something likely to suit their tastes. Macmillan & Co., New York, publishers. For sale by Lippincott. Price, $1.50.

"Blue Jackets of '61" is a history of the Navy in the late war between the North and South, that would make a grand present for a boy. It is intended for younger readers, but while specially adapted to their instruction and amusement, older heads will also find its facts and statements of the utmost value and interest. Every effort has been made by the author, Willis J. Abbot, to give a reliable and at the same time clear account of the part taken by the naval branch of the service in the events of those days. Everything is put in such a way as is most likely to impress what it conveys on the mind. With these merits moreover, the book avoids expressing any local or sectional opinions, except those that are necessary, making it acceptable to both North and South. Along with the splendid text there are some hundred or so of fine engravings, and elegant stiff canvass back covers, colored in blue and gold, and embossed in imitation of a vessel's sails. Dodd, Mead & Co., publishers, New York. For sale by Lippincott. Price, $3.

No writer, in some respects, stands higher than E. P. Roe, and this popularity is well deserved. Whatever subject he teaches is made the most of, and conveys impressions of usefulness and pleasure at once vivid and lasting. Two volumes of a new and uniform series of his works have been issued by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. One is the well known "Nature's Serial Story," whose popularity is co-extensive with the reading public, with illustrations by W. Hamilton Gibson and F. Dielman; the other is a new one, with the queer title, "He Fell in Love with His Wife." It tells, in a happy fashion, how a marriage for convenience only, became in time a true union of loving hearts. The sentiments, although the nature of the subject gives a chance for mawkishness, are all natural, and what is more, healthful. The volumes are of convenient size, and neatly printed in clear type. For sale by Lippincott & Co.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The *Quiver* for January opens with the second and last paper on the "London Busmen." "Some London Homes for Working boys and their management" are described, "Bible Trades" are discussed by Rev. J. Hides Hitchen, Rev. E. J. Hardy has a sensible paper about "Mothers." An interesting account is given of the "Indian Farms and Training school in Canada," by Margaret Polson Murray. The second and concluding paper on "A Boat Journey Eight Hundred Miles Overland," is given together with three serial and some shorter stories and poems, and a large bundle of "Short Arrows." Cassell & Company, publishers, New York.

In the *Magazine of Art* for January, the frontispiece, "Pandora's Box," is a striking study. The place of honor is given to an account of "Movements in American Art." Excellent reproductions are given through the text of paintings by F. S. Church, Thomas Eakins, H. Siddons Mowbray and Gilbert Gaul. This paper is followed by one on "English Decorative Needlework," copiously illustrated. Among the other contents are "The Paris of the Revolution," "Some portraits of Mrs. Siddons," and an interesting account of art in South Australia and New South Wales. In the series of papers on "The Romance of Art" is given the story of Van Dyck at the court of Charles I. A second paper on that wonderful English house, Houghton Tower, a short poem, and some crisp American and foreign art notes complete the number. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

WE intend, we desire, we hope, we plan, but the tone lacks in the privileged push, and swing, of those called to go forth "conquering and to conquer."

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A WANDERING RAT.

Once in about every 25 years Norway and Sweden are the scene of a migration which is one of the wonders of the natural world. The participants in this movement are tiny, rat-like creatures, called popularly lemmings. The lemming is not more than six inches long, including a half-inch tail, and individually is no more interesting than a thousand other animals, but collectively it challenges attention.

It lives ordinarily among the peat mosses of the mountains, and although the principal food of all the predacious animals of that region, it continues to increase so rapidly in numbers that by the time the migratory movement takes place the mountains fairly swarm with its congregated families.

From near and from far the lemmings come led by a restless impulse, and, after forming an immense army on some great plateau, start east or west, as the case may be, and in an undeviating line march forward. Hills, valleys, lakes, rivers are crossed with an utter disregard of the havoc made in their ranks by death.

It is a sad time for the farmer, for when the living torrent pours over a cultivated section it spreads and lingers till everything eatable is gone, in the meantime bringing forth young in great numbers and with unusual rapidity, so that despite all the numerous causes of destruction that follow or await it, the terrible army actually increases in size during its onward march.

Besides the rivers and lakes, which swallow up great multitudes, a prolific source of death is found in the various animals of the country. Carnivorous beasts and birds, such as wolves, foxes, wild-cats, the various members of the weasel family, eagles, hawks, and owls, follow the moving army with wild cries and insatiable gluttony.

This is quite natural, perhaps, but what is extraordinary, many herbivorous animals seem to be driven to fury by the invasion of the little creatures, and deserting their ordinary food, rush among the lemmings, and not only stamp them to death, but use their teeth to the same purpose, and even eat the flesh. Reindeer and cows are prominent in this deadly employment, while man, with his household pets, the cat and the dog, exerts himself in the same destructive work.

Still the stream pours on, never deviating from the course first laid out, filling the air with vile odors and making the earth loathsome. For three years this terrible scourge afflicts the land, resisting all efforts to turn it or conquer it, and covering with desolation every spot it visits, until at last the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Bothnia interposes its impassable waters. Does it then turn back? No. With the same frightful disregard of consequences which has characterized the infatuated creature from the outset, the whole army, with eager haste, plunges into the waves, and—there ends the migration.

What is the cause of this extraordinary fact? Nobody knows. The most plausible theory yet advanced says that the vast increase in numbers of the lemming in its mountain home creates a scarcity of food.

Hunger arouses the desire to seek for food elsewhere, and a movement once made, a long dormant instinct of migration, which most animals possess, forces it to continue its onward march with unreasoning and fatal persistency.

Olaus Magnus and some other writers have suggested that the lemmings are a scourge rained down from heaven, but there are several fairly good reasons for not accepting this theory.

COLOR MUSIC.—Suppose, by a wild stretch of imagination, some mechanism that will make a rod turn round one of its ends, quite slowly at first, but then faster and faster, till it will revolve any number of times in a second; which is, of course, perfectly imaginable, though you could not find such rod or put together such a mechanism.

Let the whirling go on in a dark room, and suppose a man there knowing nothing of the rod, how will he be affected by it? So long as it turns but a few times in a second he will not be affected at all unless he is near enough to receive a blow on the skin, but as soon as it begins to spin from sixteen to twenty times a second, a deep, growing note will break in upon him through his ear; and as the rate then grows swifter the tone will go on becoming less and less grave, till it will receive a pitch of shrillness hardly to be borne, when the speed has to be counted by tens of thousands. At length, about the stage of 40,000 revolutions a second more or less, the shrillness will pass into stillness; silence will again reign as at the first, nor any more be broken. The rod might now plunge on in mad fury for a very long time without making any difference to the man; but let it suddenly come to whirl some million times a second, and through intervening space faint rays of heat will begin to steal toward him, setting up a feeling of warmth in his skin, which will again grow more and more intense, as now through tens and hundreds and thousands of millions the rate of revolution is supposed to rise.

Why not billions? Thehe at at first will be only so much the greater. But, lo! about the stage of about four hundred billions there is more—a dim red light becomes visible in the gloom; and now, while the rate still mounts up, the heat in its turn dies away, till it vanishes as the sound vanished; but the red light will have passed for the eye into a yellow, a green, a blue, and at last of all, a violet.

And to the violet, the revolutions being about 800,000,000,000 a second, there will succeed darkness,—night, as in the beginning. This darkness, too, like the stillness, will never more be broken.

ON THE CHINESE STAGE.

No women are employed in the Chinese theatre. Their parts are assumed by men who seek to emulate the feminine traits by uttering their sentences in a squeaky falsetto, adopting a labored walk and a generous use of paint and powder.

The male characters are attired in fantastic costumes of indescribable designs and either wear long, thin gray beards or decorate their physiognomies with red and white stripes and disks.

To an American the performance is a monotonous repetition of meaningless pantomimes, interspersed with occasional dialogues and heathenish songs.

At short intervals, apparently without reason—certainly without rhyme—the orchestra burst in with a demoniac crash of gongs, bells and cymbals, shrill notes of stringed instruments and shrieks from clarionets. During all this uproar the actors stick to the text like grim death, although their voices cannot possibly be heard three feet from the stage.

Each male impersonator effects his entree, whether in the part of the heavy villain or friend of the family, in a manner calculated to produce a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of the audience.

He first makes a circuit of the stage in long, pompous strides, then with much seriousness and tedious preliminaries attempts a dance alone but so ungraceful and labored is each movement that the exhibition is really painful.

When the stage is cleared and new relays are expected one of the musicians shifts a chair or table or procures some requisite "property" from behind the curtained door, all the while diligently puffing away at his cigarette.

A breeder of mischief stealthily approaches a group of law-abiding citizens. He pauses a moment, then slowly lifts each foot alternately from the ground, every time a trifle higher, until he reaches his limitations: at the same time he makes similar motions with his arms.

He then stretches his neck out as far as nature will permit, forming in his painful attitude a little tableau all by himself, and behold! what, to the mind's eye, the man has really accomplished is to climb a tree and peer cautiously through the branches.

In general hand-to-hand conflicts the vanquished appear to fall willing victims to the superior prowess of the attacking foe. The ground is strewn with the dead. They are not, however, altogether oblivious of the things of this life, and do not scruple to roll their eyes in the direction of the gallery if their curiosity gets the better of them or raise up on elbow and glance pleasantly and familiarly about. And of course it excites no comment when the dead arise, readjust their mortal coil and colly walked off the stage.

FASHION IN DISEASE.—Most physicians are likely to have theories about diseases rather than actual knowledge thereof, because, being ignorant of what is going on inside the human body, they are forced to surmise and infer, from certain data, often insufficient. Their theories seem to enjoy a kind of periodicity. Physicians look to this or that organ, and usually find, or think they find, that its derangement lies at the base of the trouble.

In the same way specialists always discover in patients what is their specialty, whether it be brain, heart, liver, lungs or kidneys, as most of us are prone to find what we seek.

Until Richard Bright had published his treatises, forty-six and forty-seven years ago, no one had supposed the kidneys affected, and he might not have turned his attention to this disorder but for his own nephritic sufferings, which finally caused his death. Bright's disease gets its name from him, and ever since he described its symptoms physicians have regarded the kidneys as the source of numberless ailments.

Everyone must have noticed how constantly nowadays the cause of mortality is called Bright's disease; often, indeed, when it is something else. Many of the ablest and most experienced practitioners regard Bright's disease, or albumenuria, as a combination of diseases, rather than a separate and distinct disease. This would account for the number of old persons who are thought to die of albumenuria.

A man who has long been ill must be affected in different organs, the derangement of one causing the derangement of another. Thus a general breaking down is frequently pronounced albumenuria. The kidneys have, in the way of diagnoses, nearly had their run, which has lasted nearly half a century.

The liver is now having its turn, and ere long, no doubt, most disorders will be attributed thereto. This is moderately safe because its condition is hard to determine, and theory will answer in the absence of facts. There are eras and fashions in maladies, as in other things, and at present the liver may be said to be coming in.

A FAMILY of four brothers named Acken, living in Middlesex county, N.J., are noted for their vigor and size. A Trenton paper gives their ages, heights and weights as follows: William is 83 years old, six feet three inches in height, and weighs 250 pounds; Henry is 81, six feet four, and weighs 270; Samuel is 79, six feet five, and weighs 225; Theodore is 73, six feet six, and weighs 230 pounds. They are in excellent health and vigorous beyond their years.

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It will in a few moments, when taken according to directions, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Summer Complaint, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Colic, Wind in the Bowels, and all internal pains.

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Humorous.

THE BETTER WAY.

I've been 'round this country from Texas to Maine,
And mostly with nary a red;
I've walked it for miles in the wettest of rain,
And slept on a board for a bed.
But I've learned a few comfortin' facts by the way,
While living this queer life of mine,
And the principal one of the lot, let me say,
Is "it's better to whistle than whine."

I know that the winter 's comin' on fast:
I'm aware that a home I ain't got;
I see that the clothes I'm a wearing won't last
'Till I reach a more torrider spot.
But nobody yet has discovered in me
Anxiety's tiniest sign;
And its jest 'cause I learnt in my youth, don't you see,
That "it's better to whistle than whine."

It strikes me somehow that it's mighty durn queer
That fellers much wiser than me
Keep kickin' because this terrestrial sphere
Ain't jest what they want it to be.
Their parents have filled them with Latin and Greek,
But their logic ain't equal to mine,
Or else they would know every day in the week
That "it's better to whistle than whine."

—U. N. NONE.

At arm's length—Our hands.

Of two evils choose neither.

Home ruler—The broomstick.

Sold again—Second-hand articles.

The woman question—"Is she pretty?"

Where there is a will there are generally dissatisfied relatives.

Justice is the soap suds with which we wash the flannel shirt of wrong.

Why are pawnbrokers like pioneers of progress?—Because they are always ready to make an advance.

"I aim to tell the truth," said Brown. "Yes," remarked an acquaintance; "but you are a very bad shot."

The man whose wife woke him up in church by sticking a pin in him, says he doesn't like such pointed suggestions.

A man in Morrisburg, Canada, has a trunk 250 years old. It has never used tobacco in any form and can read fine print without spectacles.

There is no place like home to the man who has to split kindlings, put out the clothes line and keep his mother-in-law's pet poodle free from fleas.

An exchange gives a long list of reasons why you shouldn't snub a boy, but omits the principal one, which is that nine times out of ten it is a waste of time to try.

An exchange says that we owe much to foreigners. This is as it should be. It is much more agreeable to owe a foreigner than a man who lives just around the corner.

Smith, with effusion: "Hello, Brown, is that you? I heard you were drowned. Brown, with sadness: "No; it was my brother." Smith, thoughtlessly: "What a pity."

A lecturer is going around the country asking in public places: "Where is the Ideal Wife?" We don't know; we don't want to know. What a man wants is a real wife, and he doesn't always get her.

"Mother, why are the marriage and death notices always put next to each other in the paper?" "I don't know, Johnny." "Well, I'll bet I know—'cause it's jist about as bad to git married as it is to die."

"Indeed, it happened in less time than it takes me to tell it," said the lady, who was considered somewhat of a bore. "Oh, I haven't the least doubt of that!" replied her patient and truthful listener.

Military discipline at West Point is so strict that a beetle may crawl down a private's back when he is in the ranks, and he must not indulge in the slightest evidence of perturbation. He must simply hope that the beetle will crawl up again.

The last words of a man condemned to death were as follows. As the fatal moment approaches he asks the hangman: "What day is it today?" "Monday," murmurs the executioner. "Monday! A nice way to begin the week."

A married couple sat down the other night to a game of cards. She: "What are you going to play for?" He: "Anything you like." She: "Let us play for a velvet jacket, dear. If you lose I shall have the choosing of it, and if I lose you shall."

Two wretched looking tramps were brought up before a justice of the peace. Addressing the worst looking one, the justice said: "Where do you live?" "Nowhere." "And where do you live?" said the justice, addressing the other. "I've got the room above him," was the reply.

"Why should I borrow trouble?" remarked a well-dressed man, as he looked about him with an air of satisfaction and twirled his dainty cane. "I don't know, I am sure," responded an acquaintance gloomily, "unless it's because borrowing has become a second nature with you and you can't help it."

The following conversation occurred in the French language; it loses, we fear, none of its significance by being turned into English: "My good woman, have you only that one cow?" "Yes, sir; only this one." "How much milk a day does she give?" "Ten quarts." "And how much of it do you sell every morning?" "Fifty quarts."

At a dinner in Boston recently, according to a local report, one speaker said: "I desire to preface my remarks by saying that I don't believe a single fact or figure which the gentleman who has preceded me has given you." "And I desire to say," interjected the gentleman thus alluded to, "that I don't believe in a single fact or figure that the gentleman who is now to address you is going to give."

WOMEN AND PARADISE.—Sanctity in Morrocco proceeds from various causes. You may be born with it or you may get it any time during your life.

What one might call congenial holiness is also devisable into two kinds. First, there are those who are more or less descended from the Prophet; these are the Sheriefs of highest pretention, and their sanctity is a very comfortable source of income to them.

They receive presents from all the faithful, and the most cheerful participation in all the vices known to Islam and Christendom does not seem to jeopardize their title to holiness.

For example, let us suppose a saintly descendant of the Prophet—who most uncompromisingly forbade intoxicating drinks—is, by the munificence of believers, enabled to drink champagne to excess.

It does not matter, says the subtle minded Arab, the angel of God will not permit his saint to sin, but changes the liquid wickedness into milk in his mouth, and so, without sinning, he can get very drunk indeed.

The other class of congenital saints are idiots. Of the validity of this title I was very well able to judge, and can easily understand some slight confusion in people's minds.

I have seen a holy man of this category of sanctity one day draped in a gaudy Kidderminster carpet, smiling with all the consciousness of a dandy as he swaggered through the crowded Soko, hauled on the morrow before the Kaleef and thrown into the common prison. His offence was a petty attack with a knife upon some one who had offended him, and, from the shouts of the crowd who followed, it was evident that they were very pleased with the calamity which had befallen this good man.

But holiness may be learned by a life of devotion, and a gentleman who had accompanied a diplomatic mission to the Imperial city of Fez, told me that he there saw an aged and very corpulent man who was seeking paradise by lying naked in the middle of a crowded street. He had lain there for years, day and night, fed by the charitable, the ground actually hollowed by the weight of adipose sanctity. Women are even known to become saints, but I do not know by what means they attain this eminence, which is very rare among the sex in Mohammedan countries.

It is a common idea that the Mohammedan religion denies women souls altogether, but this is not so. Indeed, the Koran expressly says that "Paradise is not shut against any human being, no matter what age or sex, who holds the creed of Islam."

WHAT THE BLIND SEE.—The blind author of "Blindness and the Blind," says:—"When passing along a street I can distinguish shops from private houses, and even point out the doors and windows, &c., and this whether the doors be shut or open. When a window consists of more than one entire sheet of glass it is more difficult to discover than one composed of a number of small panes. From this it would appear that glass is a bad conductor of sensation, or, at any rate, of the sensation specially connected with this sense. When objects below the face are perceived, the sensation seems to come in an oblique line from the objects to the upper part of the face. While walking with a friend in a lane, I said, pointing to a fence which separated the road from a field, "Those rails are not quite as high as my shoulder," He looked at them, and said they were higher. They, however, measured about three inches lower than my shoulder. When I made this observation I was about four feet from the rails. Certainly, in this instance, facial perception was more accurate than sight. When the lower part of a fence is brickwork, and the upper part rails, the fact can be detected, and the line where the two meet easily perceived. Irregularities in height, projections, and indentations in walls can also be discovered. A similar sense is found among the animal creation, and especially in bats, who have known to fly about without striking against anything after the cruel experiment has been made of extracting their eyes."

COUNT MANSFIELD, one of the heroes of the "Thirty Years' War," feeling his end approach, rose from his sick bed, had himself arrayed in his best clothes and a complete set of armor, and thus equipped he stood on his feet, leaning on the shoulders of a couple of friends, in which attitude he shortly afterward breathed his last.

RAILROADING under the sea is the latest. The first train passed through the Severn tunnel one morning about two weeks ago. The tunnel is 4 miles and 624 yards long.

Winter Diseases.

The mortality from what are called winter diseases is not easily estimated. Coughs, colds, bronchitis, sore throats, pneumonia and consumption make up fully one-half of the death rate. It is not all due to the carelessness of the people or the severity of the climate; a chill, an exposure, a cough or cold should not produce these sad results, only when they are neglected or badly treated. The worst treatment is "letting them alone;" the next worse is drugging or dosing with inefficient drugs and mixtures. The great want is the particular Specific which will allay the fever, the congestion and the inflammation of the thin membrane, at first involved, and so prevent the extension of the disease to the substance of the lung, and thus a cure takes place in a natural and harmless way. For this purpose HUMPHREYS' HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFICS NOS. ONE and SEVEN for fever and inflammation, for coughs and colds, are sovereign; curing promptly, mildly, safely and effectually, as hundreds of thousands testify. They have been in use for many years, and have so universally met the expectations of the people that we are almost carrying "coals to New Castle" to thus speak of them. —Exchange.

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This Can Be Done by Means of the

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The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's and knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.

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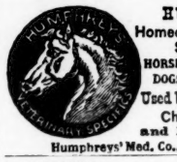

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The novelties at present incline one to the belief that splendor is to be on the increase. The mantles, both long and short, certainly show a tendency to advance in richness, and this is accomplished rather by the blending of divers kinds of ornaments than by elaboration of one special feature.

There are examples of mantles long and ample enough to form a complete costume, sumptuous alike in material, color and trimming, while others are small as a visite close fitting as a jacket, and enriched with decorations such as would befit the appearance at the smartest functions.

A good deal of ingenuity is discernible in the methods adopted for the veiling of this brilliant effect when it is deemed undesirable to show it in its entirety. For instance: a short coat of plush in a shade of seal has a loose vest, upon which is seen a massive gold embroidery, wrought on a ground of fawn-colored satin.

The loose fronts of the coat are deeply faced with similar embellishments, and so arranged that when closed the embroidery is only apparent round the throat, while when it is thrown open the rich ornamentation seems to cover the entire front of the coat.

In the latest importation of costumes, there is an evidence of increasing brightness of coloring, while even tones as vivid as geranium are to be seen upon some of the cloths now employed.

When the general effect inclines to be sombre, brilliancy is occasionally discernible through some fold, or it is imparted by means of revers, a breastplate or a pretty panel.

Pointed belts of passementerie, into which are woven sequins and coins, take their rise from the sides of the bodice to terminate some inches below the waist.

One side of a bodice often differs from another; so that folds, if apparent on the right, are usually absent on the left.

Pleats will be set in on the left shoulder, to end with a strap that buttons on the opposite side, and the revers of this will be shown at the waist.

A skirt of plush in the natural shade of the otter was so widened at the edge, and held in place by a horsehair lining, as to prevent that falling in at the feet which so often mars the effect of an untrimmed skirt.

The polonaise to be worn with this was arranged to fall as a tunic in front, having its right side bordered with lace, while the latter was apparent as a revers on the left.

A corded passementerie, into which were woven old coins of copper, was seen at the neck and wrists, besides supplying the pointed belt carried from the seams under the arm to terminate below the waist.

Another polonaise had the bodice part to resemble a smock frock, with full sleeves gathered into wristbands.

Upon a costume in a shade of ice-blue was shown a folded waistcoat of mastique cloth, edged with passementerie embroidery, which was also carried round the collar, supplied to border the cuffs and apparent upon a turned-back corner of the skirt drapery.

A vicuna costume in a shade of tobacco admitted a glimpse through its long draperies of a narrow gold panel, with the same effect given on each side of the bodice front.

The prevailing tone of the handsome dinner dresses is suggestive of a subdued drapery in rich material, being so arranged over a brilliant foundation as to leave scarcely any of the latter perceptible, whereas, in fact, the bright coloring is supplied where it can be given most artistically.

A velvet, in seal brown, showing an embossed pineapple, in its natural size, has the effect of a polonaise imparted to the folds of its skirt, which are draped to admit glimpses of nasturtium colored satin.

The same bright color is shown at the neck, as well as evident among the passementerie and leaves that form the band carried across the waist line in the front of the bodice.

In a dark begonia colored velvet a medium shade is used to suggest the foundation and under bodice. The latter shows, in the palest tone, a frilled lisse handkerchief, so folded as to give the appearance of a jabot escaping from one side of the full waistcoat.

A gown that had its bronze velvet front worked in a dog-toothed pattern shaded from gold to black, was draped with Chartreuse satin, and had side pockets formed by the drapery, but defined by the embroidery.

The long pointed embroidered bodice, displayed through the open jacket fronts, had also the waist marked in the dog-toothed design.

For morning costumes the short belt is usually brought to a point some inches below the waist. In dresses for evening wear the leading Paris house carries it straight across from one side seam to the other, to end with rosette or buckle.

Tulle is entering extensively into the evening dresses, for debutantes, and has a soft, simple effect when mingled, as it often is, with clusters of baby ribbons. The latter are sometimes supplied in heights to border closely kilted flounces of tulle.

Shaded beads appear upon others, and, thanks to some new process these no longer incur the risk of removal by friction, while a bordering to match is produced by means of floss silk.

A tulle in a shade of buttercup was draped with folds of tulle, and had long sprays of bluets and grass carried from the shoulder to the edge of the skirt.

Crepe lisse is also being adopted by youthful wearers, and is especially well adapted for the soft pleated draperies into which it seems to fall of its own accord; it is likewise used for the fashioning of that sort of drawn baby bodice which is a revival of this season.

A specimen of this was shown in a shade of lisse under a bodice of peach satin, having on its surface a conventional primrose.

Valenciennes lace is much in favor for the dresses of bridesmaids, for which the skirts are made in two heights of lace, with folds of soft Surah laid on at intervals. Insertion and baby ribbon combine with clever manipulation to supply a bodice to correspond.

Space does not suffice for the description of the magnificence effected by means of beads, velvet, and hand-painting upon surfaces of white satin and moire, which will probably find a place upon toilettes for balls.

The handsome woven pentes, or panels, and the brocatelles having metallic designs, which were a decided feature of last season, are this year somewhat yielding the palm of favor to aprons and loose draperies.

In either case the same brilliant effect is imparted to one portion of the costume; but in the treatment of lighter textures the ornamentation is often achieved upon a perfectly transparent foundation.

The variety of decoration introduced into these draperies is infinite, while the beauty of them seems ever increasing. The richest examples can no longer be effected by the loom.

Hand-beading hand-painting, and hand-embroidery—especially the last—are all in much request. When the designs are imparted in color on to silk, those represented by the needle are as carefully blended and shaded as if a paint brush had been employed.

Frequently only one color is introduced, but it is by a diversity of shades that the harmonious result is achieved.

On a foundation of ottoman silk, branches of trees showing both leaves and flowers, besprinkled with such birds as wrens and swallows, may be seen in tones of either gray or brown but faultlessly true to nature.

On heliotrope velvet, flowers displaying every tone of that elastic color are raised and rounded to give the velvety appearance of a blossom.

On cream and white foundations of silk and net are found the Louis XIV. style of embroidery effected in the soft shades of pink, blue, and brown, which Watteau loved to use.

In the same colors, so faint as to be suggestive of faded flowers, will be seen wheat-ears and bluets on satins, with Pompadour tints.

A satin stitch embroidery standing out in high relief is placed upon crepe lisse.

A still more delicate species, containing all the points *a jour*, and intricate lace stitches is nicely worked by means of a frame upon mousseline de soie. This latter, which is effected in silk, requires such strong eyesight than a woman can rarely labor at it for more than ten years. At the end of that period her failing sight gives warning of the advisability for a change of occupation.

All this style of elaborate needlework is placed where the absence of fulness allows the richness and beauty of the design to be apparent.

Where loose draperies are required, a brilliant effect is imparted by means of gold and silver filigree, faceted stones, sequins, and the artificial petals of flowers, on a foundation of net crepe de chine.

Odds and Ends.

THE COSTUMING OF DOLLS.

As around the holidays there are more or less small dolls among the presents to the children, a few hints on the subject of dressing them, to serve other useful purposes, may not be out of place.

If desired, they can be made to serve the purposes of penwipers or pincushions; for the former the legs of the doll must be removed, and replaced by several folds of black cloth, which should be sewn on to a smooth piece of the same material, fastened around the body of the doll.

For a pincushion the legs must also be dispensed with, and a narrow, slightly gored linen petticoat be sewn to a circular piece of cardboard which has been covered with material of some kind; fill the bag thus formed with bran, insert the doll into it, and securely fasten around the waist. The dolls being thus prepared may be dressed as follows:

Tyrolese peasant girl.—White muslin shirt and sleeves, both very full and gathered in at the throat and elbows; scarlet merino tight-fitting low bodice, and a yellow silk handkerchief drawn around the shoulders, with both ends crossed over the chest; a short skirt (if for a penwiper or pincushion, it must be made to touch the ground) of scarlet merino, trimmed with narrow gold braid. A high-crowned green hat, trimmed with scarlet braid and a tiny feather. Fastening the skirt on after bodice and shirt, is much the neater method, and the strings of the apron finish all off tidily. The hat may be made of cardboard, covered with green cloth or merino.

Black Forest peasant girl.—White muslin shirt and sleeves, both very full and drawn in at the throat and elbows; a low bodice, the front of which should be of scarlet merino, crossed with bars of gold braid; the back of black silk, edged at the top with narrow scarlet braid; and black silk revers, also edged with scarlet braid, crossing over the shoulders and meeting at the waist, both at the front and back. Sew the revers together beneath the arms, and the bodice is complete. An underskirt of scarlet twill, and over this a black silk skirt, trimmed with three rows of narrow scarlet braid to match that on the bodice; finished off with a tiny muslin apron also trimmed with scarlet braid. Hat of cut straw, dipped in water to soften it, and then sewn together into a sort of saucer shape, trim it with black velvet, and gum it on to the doll's head; black velvet strings may also be added.

Bahama fruit seller.—For this costume a small black doll must be obtained; dress it simply in lilac print, only the neck should be cut rather lower in order to show the black shoulders of the doll, and the sleeves should also be rather shorter. A little square with muslin apron trimmed with scarlet braid must be tied around the doll's waist with strings of the same colored braid. A white muslin turban should be gummed to the doll's head, and a string of gaily colored beads be fastened around its throat. To complete the costume, procure some willow shavings, such as are used to fill fire-grates; take three or four strips, place them evenly one upon the other, turn the ends tightly in, and sew round and round with white cotton until a flat piece large enough for a tray for the doll's head has been made. Now sew a row round on the top of the outer edge, and continue doing so until a shallow brim is formed; fasten some monkey nuts or sweets upon the tray, and sew it on to the turban. Make a little hat for the doll out of the willow shavings, and tie it to the doll's hand; the tray and the hat will both have quite a foreign appearance and appear to be of native manufacture. The willow shavings are very easy to manipulate, and all sorts of dolls' hats and baskets can be made from them.

African man.—Procure a black Dutch doll, dress it in full white cambric trousers, drawn in below the knee in knickerbocker fashion, and a short scarlet blouse trimmed with gold braid, the blouse to be drawn in at the waist and shoulders, leaving the neck partly bare; sleeves to match; a white muslin turban, and a small willow hat trimmed with scarlet ribbon. The most suitable kind is that known as China ribbon. This doll and the preceding one, made in rather small size, may be fastened on to a piece of cardboard, covered with green cloth or velvet, and, with the addition of a little fruit stall, will make a charming toy for a child.

Nurse.—A suitable dress for a doll destined to serve the purpose of a pincushion, is as follows: The doll should be one of those pretty little biscuit china ones. Dress her in scarlet or blue merino, with muslin apron, bib and pockets, trimmed with narrow lace or scarlet or yellow braid; a mob cap, gummed on to her head, and in her arms a baby in long clothes, the head of the baby to be made from an old kid glove; eyes, etc., to be painted on it. The skirt of the doll should be gathered and drawn over the circular cardboard foundation.

Small Japanese hand-screens may be covered with satin, nun's veiling, etc., and have a pocket fastened to the front, upon which a spray of flowers, a bird or an insect should be painted or embroidered. Strings to suspend the screen must be fastened to the handle, and a loose white paper lining be slipped into the pocket, which will then serve the purpose of a toilet tidy.

Numberless other suggestions might be made but the few enumerated will probably be more than enough for any reader.

We have certain work to do for our heads and that is to be done strenuously; other work to do for our delight, and that is to be done heartily; neither is to be done by halves or shifts, but with a will, and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all.

Tombstone, Ari., has a variable climate. At sunrise the other day the mercury was 30° above zero, and at 2 P. M. 70°.

Confidential Correspondents.

Dorothy.—**Write politely, and do not** on any account attempt sarcasm. Say plainly that you would be glad to meet him, and, when he calls, behave in a quiet and friendly way. You are fretting about a mere trifle.

S. J. C.—**You are right as far as you go.** But some men, who have excellent wives that do all they can to make their homes pleasant, nevertheless stray off into bad company and acquire bad habits which finally wreck their domestic life.

Gunter.—**You can learn surveying by** assisting a surveyor, or by attending a course in civil engineering in any school which teaches that branch of education. 2. A good surveyor must understand ordinary arithmetic, and the elements of algebra, trigonometry, and geometry.

A. K. W.—**It would be very indiscreet** for parties to get married under such circumstances. They would run great risk of making themselves miserable. The good, old-fashioned way of allowing a reasonable time for acquaintance and courtship before marriage is much to be preferred.

Ina.—**Such terms as untruthful, selfish** and deceitful, are rather harsh ones to apply to the gentleman, but they are so constantly associated by poets and novel writers with any falling off in the attentions of a lover, that we scarcely expect young ladies to believe that indifference may arise without deserving such hard names.

T. M.—**Mourning for a father is worn** about a year. None of your other questions can be answered directly. In regard to them, the usage of the neighborhood, and your own feelings, must be your guide. Most people would avoid the theatre for the whole year. There would be no impropriety in using a musical instrument, when alone, in your house, at any time. Many have found in music the fittest expression of grief.

Reader.—**The distance a body would** travel, in any given time, falling through a vacuum, under the influence of force equal to that of gravity, at the surface of the earth, may be found by multiplying the square of the number of seconds by the distance traversed in the first second. Applying this rule to the example you give, and taking your figures, which are correct enough for practical purposes you will find the distance through which a body would fall, in vacuum, in one minute to be 57,000 feet, or nearly eleven miles.

W. R. F.—**Strictly speaking, and according** to modern usage, a pair is only two of a kind. But formerly it meant any number of things of the same kind used together, and was analogous to set, pack, flight or string; as, a pair of chessmen for a set of chessmen; a pair of cards, for a pack of cards; a pair of stairs, for a flight of stairs; a pair of beads, for a string of beads. There are four boxing-gloves in a pair by many, just as some persons still say a pair of stairs, instead of a flight of stairs.

L. L. B.—**The naturalists tell us that the** seventeen-year locust passes the period of its absence under ground. It burrows there as a worm or grub for seventeen years before it is prepared to make its appearance above ground. When it at last feels that the time has come for it to emerge into the sunshine it begins to dig its way out. After coming to maturity and laying its eggs it dies; and in seventeen years its offspring begin to dig their way out; and so the work goes on from period to period.

S. N. Y.—**A swage is a tool used by** blacksmiths and other workers in metals for shaping certain products of their skill. The swage is variously shaped or grooved on the face. It is laid on the metal which is to be shaped, or the metal laid on it, and then hammered with a sledge, and this process is called swaging. Sometimes, when the hammering is too long continued after the metal ceases to be red hot, its tenacity is destroyed, and it becomes very brittle. After a piece of metal has been rendered brittle by swaging, or cold hammering, as the process is also called, its toughness and tenacity can be restored by heating it to a dull red heat and leaving it to cool gradually.

M. T.—**All the "queer words" you men**tion (except selenography) come from the Greek word seismos, which means an earthquake. The "seismic area" means the tract on the earth's surface within which the shock of an earthquake is felt. A seismometer, or a seismoscope, is an instrument for measuring the duration and force of an earthquake. Seismology is the science of earthquakes. Selenography is a description of the surface of the moon, as geography is a description of the surface of the earth. Hence the statement you quote, that "seismology is undoubtedly closely allied with selenography," means that earthquakes are in some way connected with or affected by the moon—an idea, by the way, which is not generally favored by scientific men.

R. P. C.—**Yes, it is quite correct to say** that a person died by the sword; but it is not correct to say that he died by cholera; it should be of cholera. When a person dies of any disease, the preposition of is used; as, he died of cholera, or of scarlet fever, or of the small-pox. But when death is occasioned by the use of an instrument, or by any physical accident, then the preposition by is used; as, he died by the sword, or by drowning, or by a pistol shot. In speaking of the consequences that attend events or actions the preposition with is used; as, the burning of the hotel was attended with (not by) frightful consequences. But when persons are spoken of as attending upon anyone, the preposition by is used; as, the governor was attended on his trip by several distinguished persons.

Julia.—**The rules of etiquette, so far as** they relate to social gatherings, are established to enable assemblages of ladies and gentlemen to get along without confusion and in the most agreeable way. The more strictly they are followed, the more pleasure will the members of a social assemblage enjoy. In escorting the young lady to the ball, you should, on entering the building where the entertainment is given, at once accompany her to the entrance of the ladies' dressing-room, and leaving her there, you should go to the gentlemen's dressing-room. From there you go to the vicinity of the ladies' room, where you hold yourself in readiness to join the lady in the grand march, when the master of ceremonies gives the signal for that movement. You, of course dance the first set with her, introduce her to friends, and procure her partners, if necessary, or request the floor manager to do so. When the supper hour arrives you should accompany her to the table, see that she is comfortably seated, and pay her all those little attentions which are so gratifying to ladies all the world over.